

ILLUSTRATED TALES TO BEWITCH & BEDEVIL YOU

VAMPIRELLA

588856

VAMPI
#18

AUG. 1972

A WARREN MAGAZINE PDC 75¢



The Cold Touch of
The Conjureress
awaits Vampirella --
when she discovers
"DRACULA STILL LIVES"

VAMPI'S FEARY TALES



MY! WHAT AN ASSORTMENT OF HANDSOME MALE READERS. SO STRONG WILLED AND POWERFULL LOOKING. SURELY NO LITTLE OL' FEMALE COULD TWIST YOU AROUND HER LITTLE FINGER, RIGHTE? BEFORE YOU REPLY, ABSORB A BRIEF DISSERTATION ON...

NYMPHS

A NYMPH IS ANY TYPE OF MAGICAL MAIDEN WITH THE ABILITY TO ATTRACT OR LURE MEN. THIS CLASSIFICATION MAY ALSO INCLUDE WITCHES, WHO BY POTIONS AND SPELLS MAY ENTRANCE OR MASK THEIR TRUE FACE.

THE EARLIEST NYMPHS WERE THE **OREADS**... GODDESSES OF LOFTY MOUNTAINS... AND **DRYADS**, WHO LIVED IN DEEP FORESTS AND WERE SPIRITUALLY BOUND WITH TREES. UNWARY TRAVELLERS WERE OFTEN PREY TO EITHER THEIR PRANKS... OR AFFECTIONS.



SUPPOSEDLY PREVALENT DURING THE MIDDLE AGES WAS THE SUCCUBUS, A FEMALE DEMON WHO GAINED IMMORTALITY BY MAKING LOVE TO HUMAN MALES IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT.

VARIOUS LITERATURE AND LEGENDS GIVE US FEMALE VAMPIRES, GOHOLS, MUMIES, ETC. THESE ARE LESS GENTLER WITH MEN THAN NYMPHS. SO USE DISCRETION IN DATING STRANGE GIRLS. SOME MAY REALLY BE STRANGE!





NO. 18
AUGUST
1972

VAMPIRELLA

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Felix Mas
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Donald F. McGregor, Douglas Moench, Kevin Pagan

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SCARLET LETTERS

"I will defend Vampirella until a stake is driven through my heart," writes reader Rick Salinger. Plus Don Glut on the story behind the story.

DRACULA STILL LIVES!

The continuing adventures of Vampirella as Conrad Van Helsing wills the alien girl through time and space to confront Dracula and the Conjurers.

KALI

The tale of the Goddess Kali beset by the powers of the mad magician Caligor. He wished the maiden girl as a sacrifice to the great god Agni.

SONG OF A SAD-EYED SORCERESS

One woman can be all things to a man, as David Winters learns to his everlasting regret. Come walk the spiral road of the soul and the serpent.

WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN!

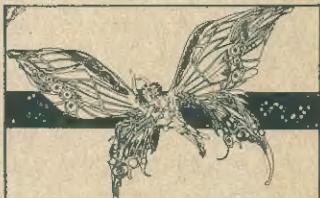
Like a thing unknown, the Cates' mansion sat proudly on the crest of death, its gabled roof sagging with the weight of a century-old murdered ghost.

VAMPI'S FLAMES

Profile of writer Kevin Pagan, author of "Nymphs" on p.2, plus a treasure trove of fan page terror stories, including one titled "Eye of the Skull."

THE DORIAN GRAY SYNDROME

Poor Hemut! He lived only for his art, that mysterious almost living painting people spoke of only in their darkest whispers, death's portrait.

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As to that letter from L.F. in VAMPIRELLA #16, (Reader L.F. who gave only his initials wrote, "Congratulations on converting VAMPIRELLA from a horror comic to one filled with love stories and fairy tales." —ed.) I fail to see his point. What's his gripe anyway? I will defend VAMPIRELLA until a stake is driven through my heart.

RICK SALLINGER
Liberty Bora, Pa.

L.F. doesn't know what he's talking about! Creepy and Eerie may be okay but VAMPIRELLA is tops by a long shot.

BRUCE BARR
Lawrence, Kansas

The VAMPIRELLA series is getting as bad as "General Hospital." I don't really mind the fact that the stories are far beyond the realm of normal imagination. I more or less expect that from VAMPIRELLA. But for someone who presupposes to tell the true story of VAMPIRELLA, you sure are doing a rotten job. You won't print this.

T. GAGLIANO
Warminster, Pa.

Sure wish you'd cut down on the love story atmosphere in VAMPIRELLA. We want more horror and gore! Best story in VAMPIRELLA #16 was "And Be a Bride of Chaos." The VAMPIRELLA series is really great!

MARK THOMSON
Salt Lake City, Utah

I've been following your exploits for some time, VAMPI. You've fared well thus far but it's really too bad you lost your wings back in VAMPIRELLA #8. It must be difficult for a being once so at home in the air, to be confined to earth.

SCOTT STANSBURY
Palo Alto, Calif.

"Gorilla My Dreams" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was one of your best yet! When Eva turned into a gorilla, I just about had heart failure! I've just started reading VAMPIRELLA and I think it's really great! More stories like "Gorilla My Dreams," VAMPI.

PAT FINN
Coffeen, Ill.

"I'll burn my coffin and stand in the sunlight!"

Oh wow! I've been holding off writing to say that "Wolf Hunt" in VAMPIRELLA #14 was one of the best stories I've ever seen. Now I'm glad I waited. I refer, of course, to "And Be a Bride of Chaos" in VAMPIRELLA #16. This was, in my opinion, the best of the VAMPIRELLA saga and about the greatest story yet! The only thing that burned me in Bram Stoker's novel "Dracula" was that Stoker killed off the master. Thanks to you, he is no longer dead! If "Wolf Hunt" & "And Be a Bride of Chaos" don't make the VAMPIRELLA 1973 SPECIAL ISSUE, I'll burn my coffin and stand in the sunlight!

RANDY HOLLIS
Martin, Tenn.

Better get ready to burn your coffin, Randy. Both stories are much too recent to see publication this year.

VAMPIRELLA is fantastic! I imagine you get a lot of letters which say that but I've heard that women never tire of flattery. At any rate, VAMPIRELLA #16 was excellent! I was pleased to see that the cover pictured a full page painting instead of the bordered ones on VAMPIRELLA #'s 14 & 15. The cover of VAMPIRELLA #16 was good, though not quite up to the level of the now classic VAMPIRELLA #12. It was great to see Maroto's work again in "Gorilla My Dreams." Pat Boyette is one of my very favorite artists and I really enjoyed his story, "Lover." Of course, not enough can be said of the VAMPIRELLA series. Jose Gonzalez outdoes himself with each new issue. VAMPIRELLA is destined to be the best horror fantasy book ever!

M. GREGORY BRYAN
Seminole, Fla.

The stories "Lover" and "Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16 were superb!

ERIK MIAZGA
Toronto, Canada

VAMPIRELLA #16 was a big disappointment. The only good story was "And be a Bride of Chaos." And the only reason that was any good was because of Gonzalez' artwork. When on earth is your lovely visage going to grace a poster? It has to be by Gonzalez though! I will continue to read VAMPI. I'll Chaos needs false teeth.

KYZER STEWART
Lakeland, Fla.

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note and provide some background to the stories you're reading. News of note this go-around includes word of a fantastic 17" by 11" puzzle of the cover of VAMPIRELLA #2. Painted by Bill Hughes, the cover pictures VAMPI's cousin, Evilly the witch. See p.56 for details.

This issue of VAMPIRELLA is host to the second "Tomb of the Gods" story, "Kali" on p.26, the creation of "Dax, the Warrior" artist Esteban Maroto. His "Tomb of the Gods" series will appear in future issues of VAMPIRELLA while the adventures of Dax currently run in Eerie.

The Transylvanian Count, Dracula, returns to plague VAMPIRELLA this issue after one issue's hiatus. According to VAMPIRELLA writer, T. Casey Brennan, 1972 Warren Award winner for Best Story ("On the Wings of a Bird—Creepy #36"), our Drakulonian sweetie hasn't heard the last of Dracula either.

Profiled this issue, p.66, is veteran writer Kevin Pagan, author of the VAMPI's Fears Tales piece "Nymphs" on the inside front cover. Pagan's work also appears in the current Creepy #46, with the chiller, "On the Ninth Day of Satan" about the coming of the Warlocks.

In case you've noticed some changes in VAMPIRELLA, Creepy and Eerie lately (like the start of this INSIDE # feature, for one), those responsible include J.R. Cochran, author of "The Disenfranchised" (Eerie #39), who was recently promoted to Editorial Director. Effective with Eerie #40, our new Art Director is Bill Dubay (call him "Dube"), who was profiled in VAMPIRELLA #15. Dube last illustrated "Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16 and next has a solo opus coming up in Creepy #47 titled, "Futureization Computation."

Surprise! Flo's Back and Warren's got her! Flo Steinberg, formerly of Marvel Comics, joins our Captain Company division as Marketing Director. Although she'll be spending 100% of her time on this, Mr. Warren also expects her to put an additional 25% on editorial work, where she'll be able to give us the benefit of her experience with that other publisher.



17" x 11" cover puzzle

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY Girl On the Red Asteroid

Don Glut, author of "Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16, gives his reasons for writing the piece: My memory to the writing of "Girl on the Red Asteroid" is rather vague. I recall being requested to write a science fiction story for a paperback anthology about three years ago. After trying to come up with something original, I

thought of a beautiful girl hatching from an egg on an alien world. After that, the story was a cinch to write. Unfortunately, neither the story nor anthology ever saw print due to a problem with the publishing company. So, a few years later, I made some changes in the story and adapted it to the format of VAMPIRELLA. Thus, it's finally printed.

"Jose Gonzalez is a Michaelangelo when it comes to drawing Vampirella!"

You've really made it big, VAMPI. Keep that great combination of stories, artwork and covers going and you'll put the "bite" on everybody! Let's have more of you by Jose Gonzalez. He's a Michaelangelo when it comes to drawing you!

BRUCE HOLROYD
Harrisburg, Pa.

This little epistle concerns two letters that saw print in VAMPIRELLA #17. One was from Mike Adkisson who said there was too much blood and gore in VAMPIRELLA. Hey man, this is a horror comic! If you dig peace and love, you should be reading love comics. The other letter, signed only "Paty," read like a witches brew. I think "Paty," whoever she is, has been watching TV's "Bewitched" too long. I may be a male chauvinist but at least I'm giving my full name.

STEPHEN WISHER
Metamora, Ill.

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways: Jose Gonzalez, Esteban Maroto, Auraleon and Sanjulian to name a few. That is how I love you. Ever since our dear though eccentric Uncle Creepy lost the old greats like Reed Crandall (Lost? Uncle says there's a Reed Crandall piece coming up in Creepy #47—ed.), I thought the artwork would never be the same. Thanks to you, VAMPI, your new artists rival the talents of the greatest master of all, "Prince Valiant" artist Hal Foster. After all these years of reading VAMPIRELLA, Creepy and Eerie and having mixed emotions about the quality of each issue, the latest VAMPIRELLA #16, brought together all of my favorites.

BRUCE BALSEY
Rochester, N.Y.



Cause of much letter page comment this go-around is "Purification," a three-page humor piece written and illustrated by Nebot from VAMPIRELLA #16. Writes El Segundo, Calif. reader DRAKE LETCHER, "Who's this Nebot? You know who I'm talking about. The guy who drew that great story 'Purification.' His work is really fabulous! Give us more Nebot. Wow! Great! Fantastic! Super! Out of sight!"

"Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was terrific!

ALFREDO ALFONSO JR.
Miami, Fla.

"And be a Bride of Chaos" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was by far the best story I've read in the last two years! And that Gonzalez art. It's really too much. The way he pictured Count Mordante's castle on p.9 of VAMPIRELLA #16 was so good that I was tempted to frame it. "Purification" was rather childish. What right does Uncle Creepy have panicking your face and making cracks about your book? (See the letters pages of Creepy #45—ed.) Both Creepy and lead-belly Eerie are so far behind you, it's ridiculous.

FRED TESKA
Yorktown Heights, N.Y.

How true. How true.

Bela Lugosi never did look like I pictured Dracula. Gonzalez' Dracula is much closer to the real thing. The best love horror story I've ever read is "Cilia" in VAMPIRELLA #16. It was excellent.

C.D.
Stinnett, Texas

Sanjulian's cover of VAMPIRELLA #16 was beautiful. I'm distressed however by the continued use of the forces of Chaos in the VAMPIRELLA series. A pure diet of Chaos, however formidable a foe he is, tends to take the versatility out of the series.

BRIAN IVERSON
Spokane, Wash.

"Cilia" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was truly unbelievable.

JERRI ROWLAND
Wrightsville, Ga.

Enjoyed "Purification" in VAMPIRELLA #16. "Gorilla My Dreams" had quite a surprise ending. Didn't much care for "Girl on the Red Asteroid." Sanjulian's cover was magnificent! Have more covers with VAMPIRELLA as she's the star!

PAUL GORDON
Miami, Fla.

Sanjulian's cover of VAMPIRELLA #16 was wild! "Purification" was a refreshing change of pace. Stories like that are just another reason why your magazine is so great. "Cilia" was billed as one of the most beautiful horror stories ever told and I have to agree with that.

JOHN KIMBLE
Willingboro, N.J.

VAMPIRELLA #16 was more like it! Like VAMPIRELLA #12 that is. I really sank my fangs in. "And be a Bride of Chaos" and "Gorilla My Dreams" were superb. The artwork in "Girl on the Red Asteroid" was great. "Cilia" was really good. We want a VAMPI poster.

JOSEPH JIMENEZ
Los Angeles, Ca.

One thing I've noticed lately is the injection of social relevance into stories about werewolves and monsters. Forget it! Relevance ruins comics. Love the VAMPIRELLA series but isn't the idea of people laying in Dracula's coffin (see VAMPIRELLA #16, p.25—ed.) getting a little tired?

EARL JONES
Ontario, Canada

What a magazine! What fascinating and artistic stories! VAMPIRELLA is pure magical ecstasy!

P. PANAGIS
Cape Province
South Africa

Gasp! Only 2,000 LETTERS THIS MORNING!

Poor Vampi's maudlin! The postman only counted out 2,000 Scarlet Letters this morning. What's wrong? Writer's cramp? Address all Scarlet Stationery to:

SCARLET LETTERS
c/o Warren Publishing Co.
145 East 32nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10016



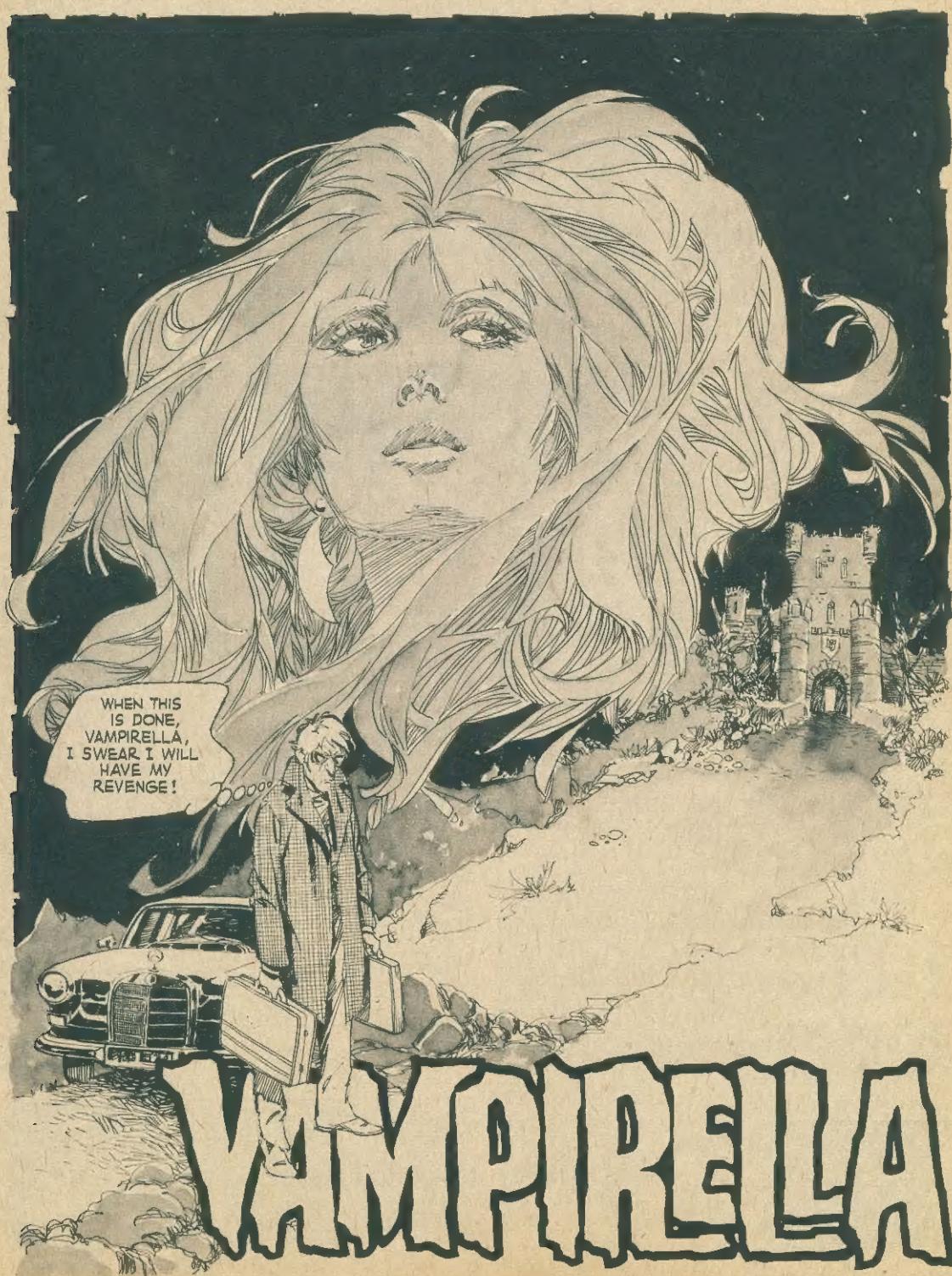
1 MILLION READERS CAN'T BE WRONG!

...they all asked for a

VAMPIRELLA FAN CLUB

SEE PAGE 61

FOR CONRAD VAN HELSING, IT HAS BEEN A LONG JOURNEY-TAKING HIM FROM THE SUNNY BUT TURBULENT ISLAND REPUBLIC OF COTE DE SOLEIL, TO THE COLD AND DREARY GROUNDS OF THE VAN HELSING FAMILY MANSION. BUT THERE IS NO JOY IN THIS HOMECOMING, ONLY HATRED FOR THE GIRL CALLED... **VAMPIRELLA**.



LIKE ME TO CARRY
THOSE BAGS IN FOR YOU,
SIR? I MEAN, IT MUST
BE HARD...BEING
BLIND!

I ASSURE YOU, DRIVER,
I CAN FIND MY WAY AROUND
THESE GROUNDS BETTER
BLIND THAN YOU CAN
SIGHTED!

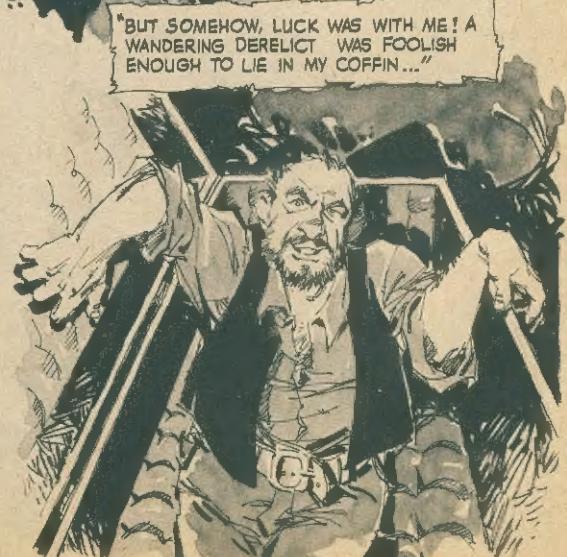
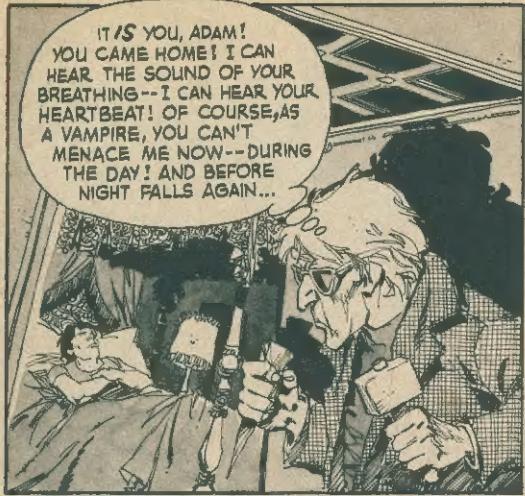
SEE VAMPIRELLA IS
"THE RESURRECTION
OF PAPA VOUDOU."

(CHOKE) IT'S
BEEN A LONG TIME
SINCE I'VE BEEN
HOME -- FAR TOO
LONG! ONCE THESE
ANCIENT HALLS WERE
ILLED WITH JOY! BUT
NOW, ADAM, MY SON--
WITH YOU DEAD,
THERE IS ONLY
EMPTINESS HERE!

THE SAME SIXTH
SENSE THAT TOLD
ME SHE HAD MADE
YOU A VAMPIRE, ADAM--
ALSO TOLD ME YOU
WOULD RETURN HERE,
TO OUR, ONCE
BELOVED HOME! THAT
IS WHY I TOO
RETURNED...

I WILL
NOT FORGET,
VAMPIRELLA, HOW YOU
LURED MY SON FROM ME
ON COTE DE SOLEIL!
EVEN THEN I WAS FOOLISH
ENOUGH TO TRUST YOU--
UNTIL MY **SIXTH SENSE**
TOLD ME WHAT I SHOULD
HAVE KNOWN ALL ALONG--
THAT YOU HAD KILLED
HIM AND TURNED HIM
INTO A VAMPIRE
LIKE YOURSELF!

TO FREE
YOUR
TORMENTED
SOUL!



* SEE VAMPIRELLA #16--"AND BE A BRIDE OF CHAOS"

"AND AS HE DID, MY SOUL ENTERED HIS BODY!"

I'VE DONE IT!
I, DRACULA, HAVE TAKEN POWER OVER THE BODY OF THIS PATHETIC DERELICT!

"I SUMMONED VAMPIRE BATS TO ATTACK MY NEW BODY SO THE TRANSFORMATION WOULD BE COMPLETE..."

SKREEP
SKREEP
SKREEP

"IT IS DONE! MY POWERS - MY VERY APPEARANCE - THEY ARE ALL RETURNED TO ME! I AM AS I WAS -- THANKS TO THE MAGIC OF THE MAD GOD CHAOS WHOM I SERVE! NOW, VAMPIRELLA, BEWARE! FOR YOU WILL SOON LEARN THAT..."

DRACULA
STILL
LIVES!



ALL THIS HAS COME TO
PASS SINCE VAMPIRELLA AND I
LAST LOCKED HORNS ! BUT THE
HOUR OF OUR NEXT CONFRONTATION-
AND VAMPIRELLA'S DOOM-
DRAWS NEAR!



ALL THAT REMAINS
NOW IS TO SUMMON THE
FORCES OF THE MAD GOD
CHAOS TO HELP ME DESTROY
HER ! AND THAT I CAN DO NOW
THROUGH THE CHIMSON
CHRONICLES - THE MAGICAL
BOOK WHICH SOMEHOW
ESCAPED DESTRUCTION
WHEN MY CASTLE FELL !



WHAT !
WHAT'S
THAT ?



NO ! NO !
IT CAN'T
BE !



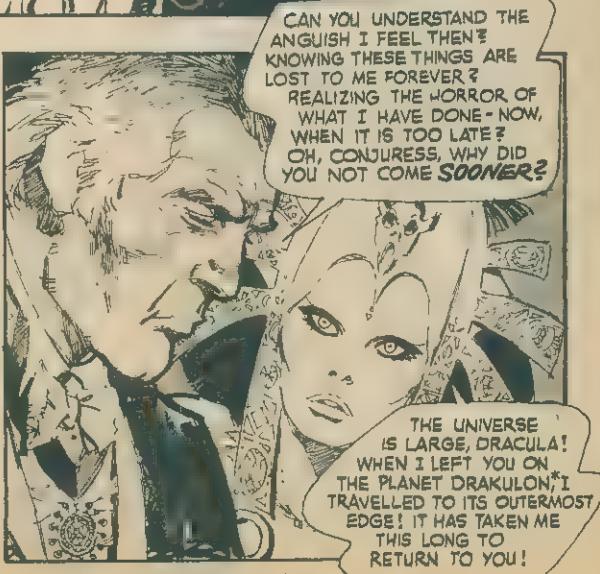
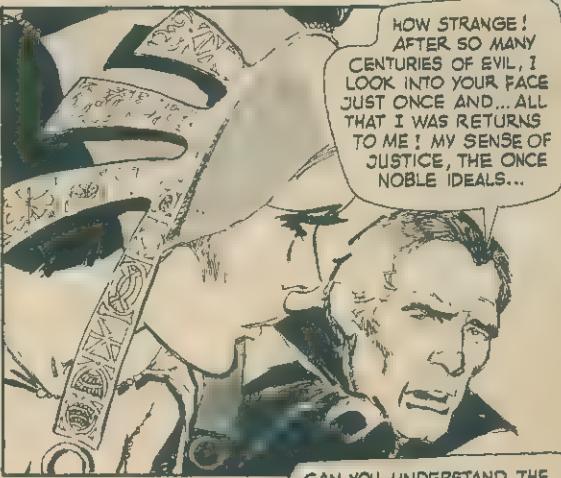
THE CONJURESS !

YES, DRACULA !
I HAVE RETURNED
FOR YOU - AFTER
ALL THESE
CENTURIES !



AND IN THAT ONE BRIEF MOMENT, A THING LONG FORGOTTEN IS REBORN IN THE SOUL OF DRACULA...

A THING CALLED GUILT, A REMEMBRANCE OF INNOCENCE AND INNOCENCE LOST, AND OF THINGS DONE WHICH CAN NEVER BE UNDONE...

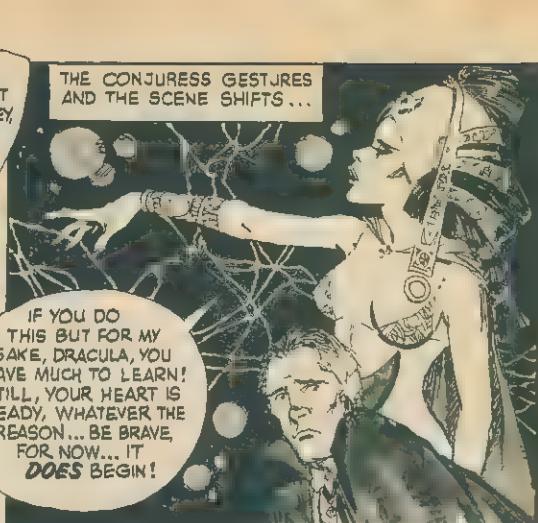


*FOR MORE OF DRACULA AND HIS HOME PLANET, DRAKULON, SEE VAMPIRELLA #16...
"AND BE A BRIDE OF CHAOS."

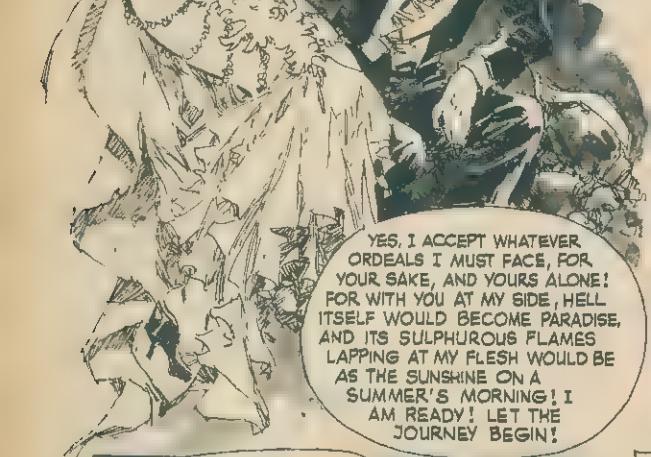


I HAVE RETURNED TO TAKE YOUR HAND AND LEAD YOU FROM WHAT YOU ARE, TO WHAT YOU **WERE!** IT WILL NOT BE AN EASY JOURNEY, DRACULA! IT WILL BE FRAUGHT WITH SUFFERING. FOR ONLY IN THAT WAY CAN YOU ATONE FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE! BUT THROUGH IT ALL, I WILL BE AT YOUR SIDE! ARE YOU WILLING?

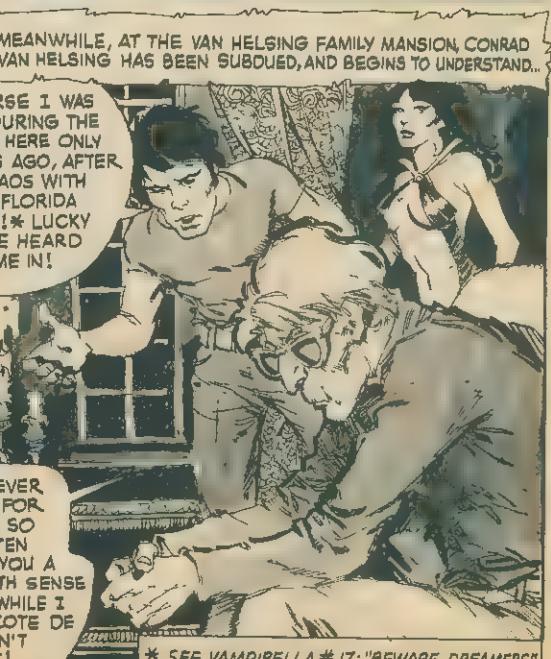
THE CONJURESS GESTURES AND THE SCENE SHIFTS ...



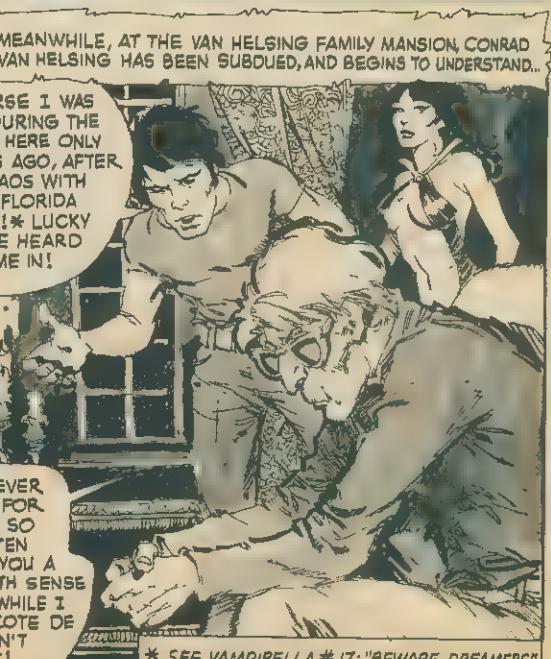
IF YOU DO THIS BUT FOR MY SAKE, DRACULA, YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN! STILL, YOUR HEART IS READY, WHATEVER THE REASON ... BE BRAVE, FOR NOW... IT **DOES BEGIN!**



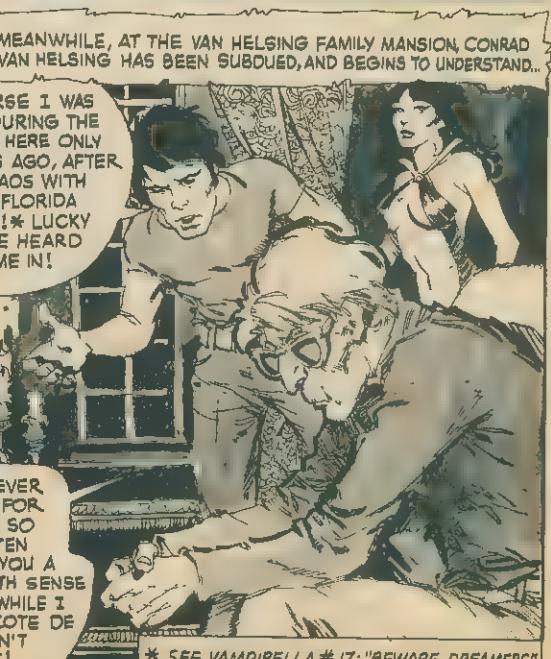
YES, I ACCEPT WHATEVER ORDEALS I MUST FACE, FOR YOUR SAKE, AND YOURS ALONE! FOR WITH YOU AT MY SIDE, HELL ITSELF WOULD BECOME PARADISE, AND ITS SULPHUROUS FLAMES LAPPING AT MY FLESH WOULD BE AS THE SUNSHINE ON A SUMMER'S MORNING! I AM READY! LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN!



MEANWHILE, AT THE VAN HELSING FAMILY MANSION, CONRAD VAN HELSING HAS BEEN SUBDUED, AND BEGINS TO UNDERSTAND...

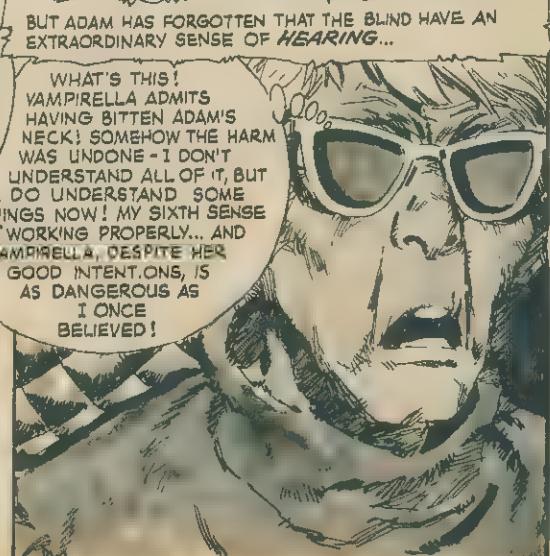


OF COURSE I WAS SLEEPING DURING THE DAY! I CAME HERE ONLY A FEW HOURS AGO, AFTER BATTLED CHAOS WITH VAMPI IN THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES!* LUCKY FOR ME, SHE HEARD YOU COME IN!



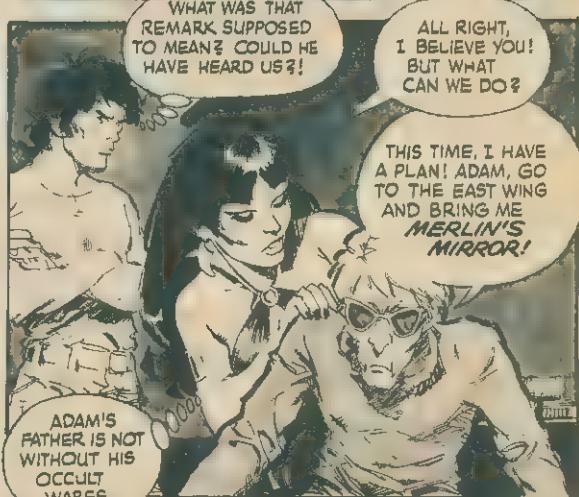
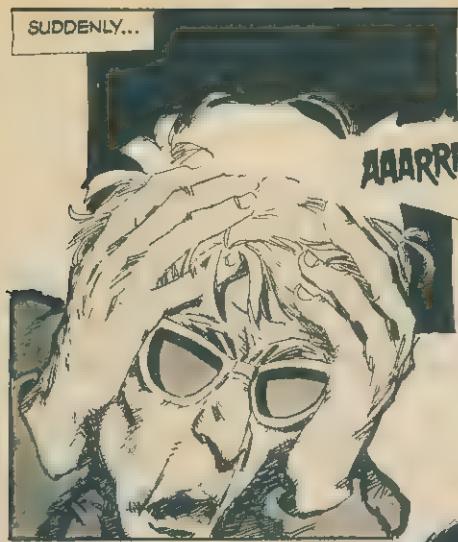
HOW CAN I EVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR THIS, ADAM? I WAS SO SURE SHE HAD BITTEN YOU AND MADE YOU A VAMPIRE! MY SIXTH SENSE TOLD ME THAT WHILE I WAS STILL ON COTE DE SOLEIL! I-I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!

* SEE VAMPIRELLA #17: "BEWARE, DREAMERS"



* SEE VAMPIRELLA - : "BEWARE, DREAMERS!"

SUDDENLY...



SOON...



CONRAD VAN HELSING
EXPLAINS HIS PLAN...

FROM WHAT YOU'VE SEEN
IN MERLIN'S MIRROR, AND
FROM WHAT MY SIXTH SENSE
TELLS ME, IT SEEMS THAT
DRACULA HAS ENTERED SOME
OTHER PLANE OF
EXISTENCE! THAT
MEANS WE CAN'T
REACH HIM BY
NATURAL
MEANS!

BUT THROUGH THE MIRROR,
WE CAN REACH HIM! MERLIN'S
MIRROR IS ALSO A
TELEPORTATION DEVICE...
THROUGH WHICH WE CAN
SEND VAMPIRELLA TO THE
STRANGE WORLD WHERE
DRACULA EXISTS! THERE-
SHE CAN DESTROY HIM!

VAMPIRELLA!!
NO, DAD, I CAN'T
LET YOU! IT'S TOO
DANGEROUS FOR
HER! SEND ME
INSTEAD!

THEN
LET ME GO
WITH YOU!

NO! I'M
SORRY, ADAM!
WE DON'T KNOW
WHAT THAT OTHER WORLD
BEYOND THE MIRROR IS
LIKE! SOMEONE LACKING
SUPERHUMAN POWERS
MIGHT BE ONLY
A HINDRANCE!

SOON...
GOOD BYE,
VAMPIRELLA! I'LL
HOPE FOR YOU... I
GUESS THAT'S ALL
I CAN DO!

SHE'S
RIGHT--WHAT GOOD
COULD I POSSIBLY
BE TO HER? IF ONLY
I HAD MORE TO
OFFER! IF ONLY I
COULD HELP
HER IN SOME
WAY!

DON'T WORRY,
ADAM--I'VE BEEN
THROUGH WORSE
THAN THIS!

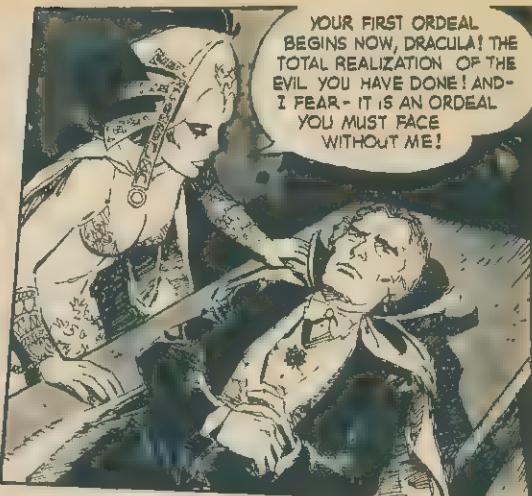
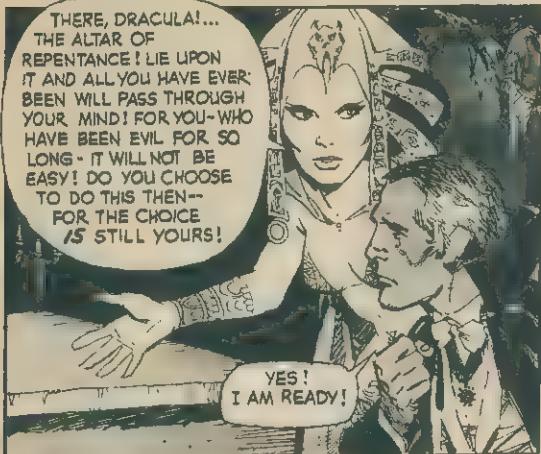
BUT NOT MUCH
WORSE! BEFORE THIS
IS THROUGH, I MAY NEED
ADAM'S HELP! BUT I HAD
TO REFUSE HIM--I CAN'T
LET HIM RISK HIS LIFE
FOR ME AGAIN! THE
BATTLE AGAINST
DRACULA IS MINE
AND MINE ALONE!

REMEMBER,
VAMPIRELLA-- WHEN
DRACULA IS DESTROYED,
YOU NEED ONLY WILL
YOURSELF TO RETURN
THROUGH THE MIRROR!

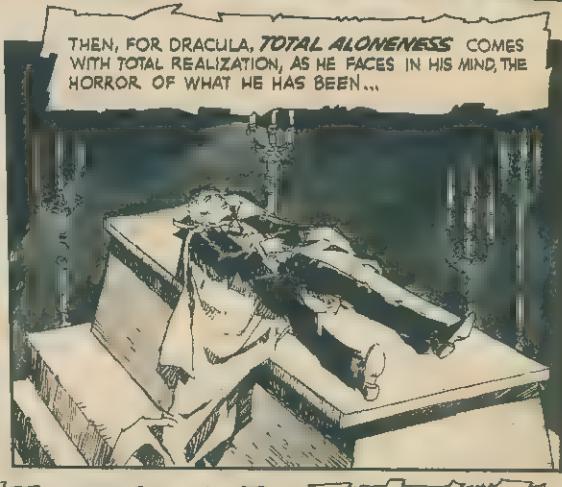
DAD!
THE MIRROR IS
CLOUDING -- I CAN'T
SEE HER ANYMORE!

THE MIRROR
IS OLD, ADAM! IT'S
BEEN DRAINED BY THE
ACT OF
TELEPORTATION! NOW...
WE CAN ONLY WAIT!

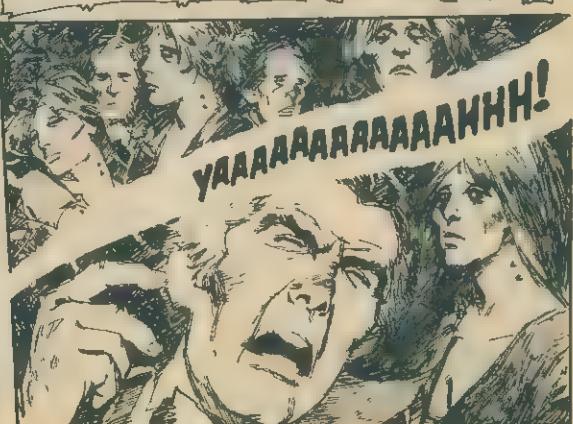
MEANWHILE, DRACULA WALKS THE *PATH OF ATONEMENT...*



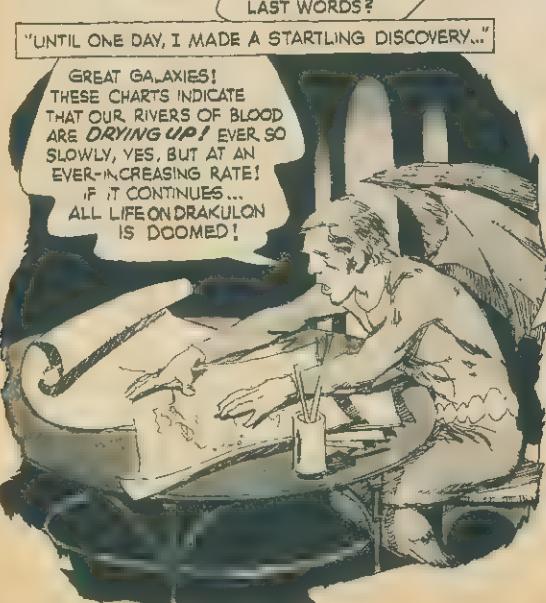
THE MEMORIES WEIGH HEAVY ON HIS TORTURED SOUL...



TILL AT LAST, HE IS DRAWN INTO HIS MEMORIES! HE LIES
ON THE ALTAR OF REPENTANCE, SEMI-CONSCIOUS, SEMI-
DELIRIOUS, ONLY DIMLY AWARE OF HIS SURROUNDINGS,
BUT **PAINFULLY** AWARE OF THE AGONIZING MEMORIES,
FLASHING THROUGH HIS MIND LIKE THE PAGES OF A
BOOK BEING TURNED TOO FAST...



THEN, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, VAMPIRELLA COMES...



"WHEN NO ONE WOULD LISTEN, I SOUGHT AN ALLY THROUGH THE OLD WAYS... WITCHCRAFT!"

THE LEGENDS ABOUND-- OF A GODDESS KNOWN ONLY AS THE CONJURESS! IF INDEED SHE DOES EXIST, PERHAPS I CAN CALL HER TO ME, TO AID ME IN MY STRUGGLE!

"THEN..."

I HAVE HEARD YOUR CALL! NOW--SPEAK! WHAT IS IT YOU WISH? IF IT IS JUST, I WILL TRY TO GRANT IT!

THE CONJURESS!

"AND IN THE WEEKS AND MONTHS TO COME..."

ALL IS NOT LOST! WITH THE PROPER APPLICATION OF MAGIC, THE RIVERS OF DRAKULON CAN BE RESTORED TO THEIR FORMER GLORY! BUT IT WILL TAKE YEARS, AND I HAVE A JOURNEY TO MAKE--TO THE OUTERMOST EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE! SO I WILL TEACH YOU THE MAGIC THAT WILL SAVE YOUR PLANET FROM DESTRUCTION! I WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

FAREWELL! I TRUST YOU WILL DO MUCH GOOD WITH WHAT I HAVE TAUGHT YOU!

FAREWELL, CONJURESS!
BUT YOU COULDN'T KNOW-- THAT I WOULD RATHER HAVE YOU BESIDE ME, THAN ALL THE POWERS YOU HAVE GIVEN ME!

"MY BITTERNESS GREW, UNTIL..."

NO, CONJURESS,
YOU COULDN'T KNOW
THAT I LOVED YOU!
WHAT? DOES A GODDESS
KNOW OF HUMAN
EMOTION?

THE TIME HAS
COME FOR THE FIRST
SPELL TO BE CAST!
BUT CAN I DO IT,
FEELING AS
I DO?

"BUT AS I BEGAN THE SPELL..."

I MUST CALL THE SPIRITS TO HELP ME WITH MY MAGIC! BUT MY HEART IS FILLED WITH BITTERNESS, NOW THAT SHE IS GONE! WHAT MANNER OF EVIL THING WILL COME TO ME, IF I ATTEMPT THIS NOW? BUT NO MATTER--IT MUST BE DONE!

WHAT HAVE I DONE?!

FORGET THE CONJURRESS, FOOL! SHE CARED NOTHING FOR YOU-- SHE IS GONE, AND YOU SHALL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN! THINK NOT OF YOUR COUNTRYMEN AT SUCH A TIME--FOR THEY TOO SCORN YOUR PATHETIC DEVOTION! LET ALL OF DRAKULON DIE--FOR... IF YOU SERVE ME, YOU SHALL LIVE ON!

YOU CALL, MAN OF DRAKULON! AND THE GREAT GOD CHAOS ANSWERS!

THE STRENGTH OF CHAOS WAS TOO GREAT, AND MY OWN DESPAIR, TOO DEEP! I BECAME HIS SERVANT, KILLING FELLOW DRAKULONIANS I HAD ONCE SWEARN TO SAVE! AT LAST, I WAS EXECUTED ON DRAKULON... BUT CHAOS RENEWED ME... ORDERED ME TO EARTH! FOR CENTURIES, I SERVED HIM THERE, AS WELL! BUT THEN, CONJURRESS, I SAW YOUR FACE AGAIN, AND REMEMBERED YOUR TRUST! I WANTED SO DESPERATELY... TO TURN BACK THE HANDS OF TIME, TO UNDO THE EVIL I HAVE DONE... TO BECOME AS I WAS...

HOW STRANGE TO HEAR THE REASONING OF EVIL! SAD! BUT I MUST NOT THINK OF THAT... I HAVE A DUTY... DRAKULA MUST DIE! MY FANGS WILL DRAIN THE LIFE BLOOD FROM HIS BODY, AND IT WILL BE OVER!

AND AT THE VAN HELSING FAMILY MANSION...



THEN...



UHHHH!



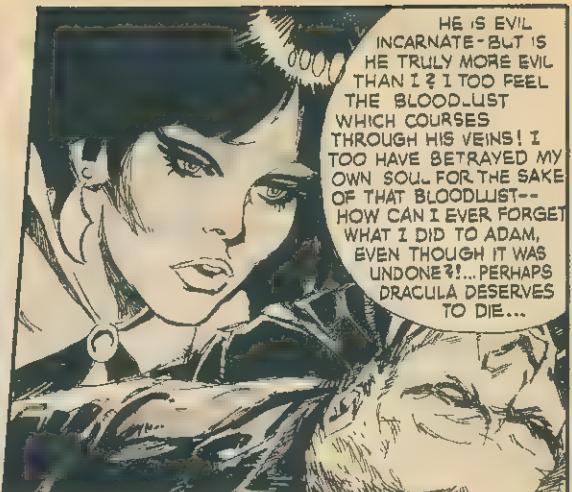
SON, I'M SORRY! I WASN'T GOING TO GO THROUGH WITH IT! BUT IT'S TOO LATE NOW! IT'S TOO LATE!

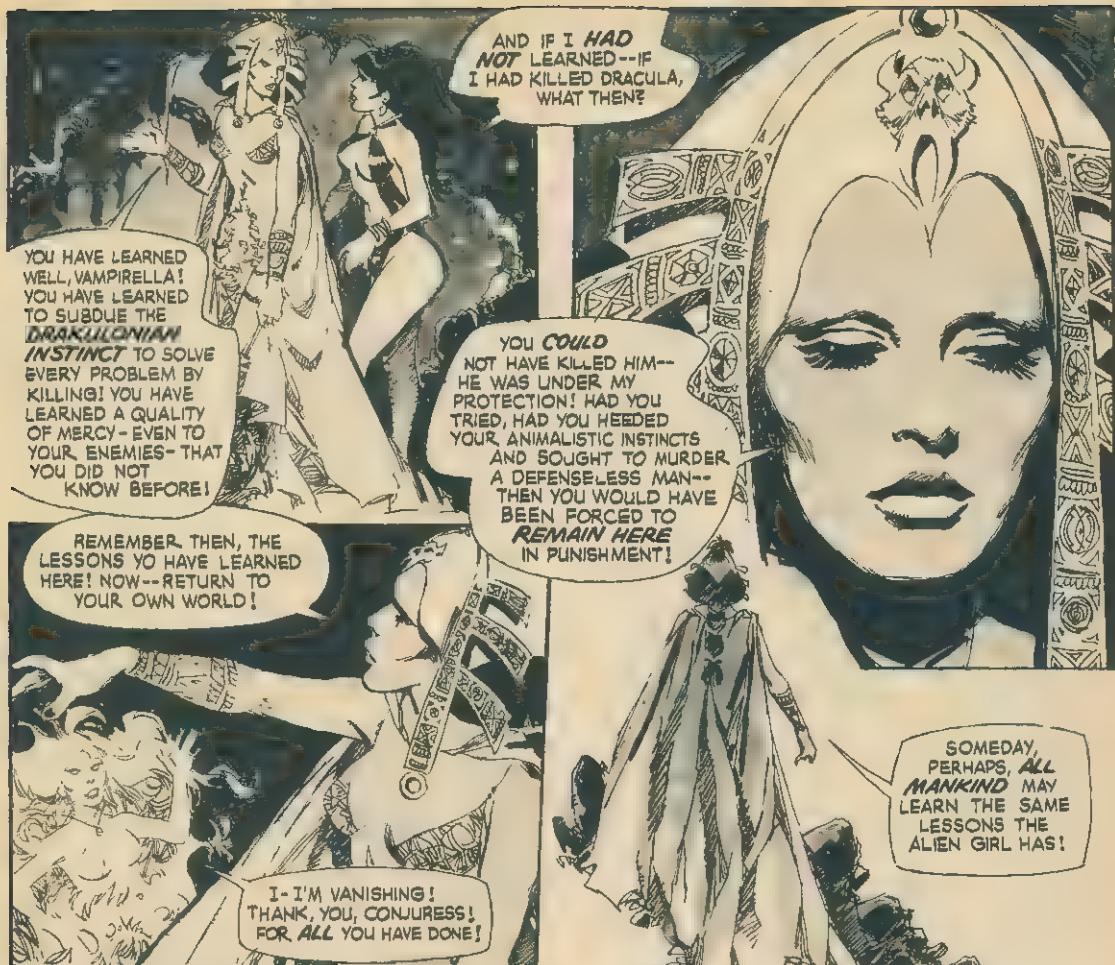
AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN THE NOWHERE WORLD WHERE VAMPIRELLA PREPARES TO DESTROY DRACULA...



SUDDENLY, DRACULA, STILL SEMI-DELIRIOUS IN HIS BELIEF THAT VAMPIRELLA IS THE CONJURRESS, REACHES OUT AND TAKES HER HAND, SQUEEZING IT GENTLY...



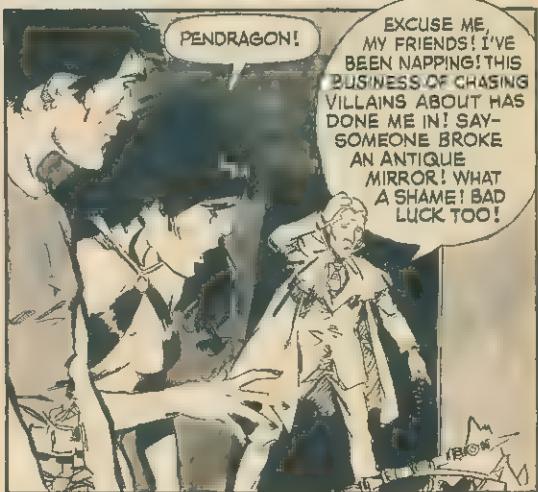


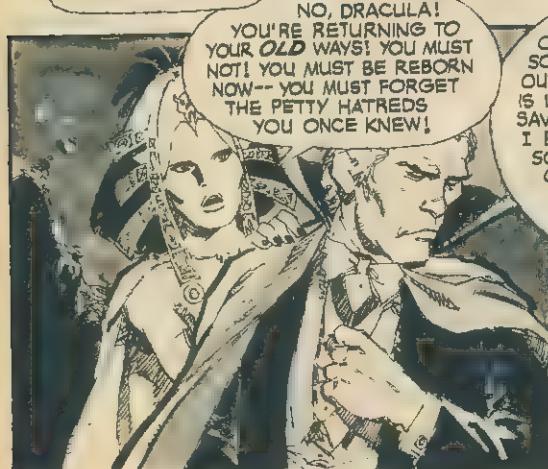
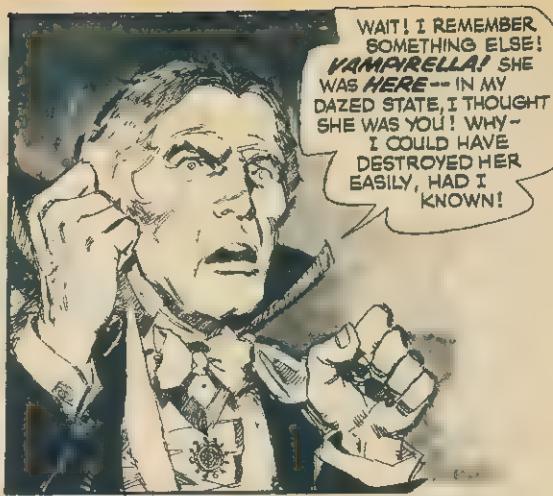
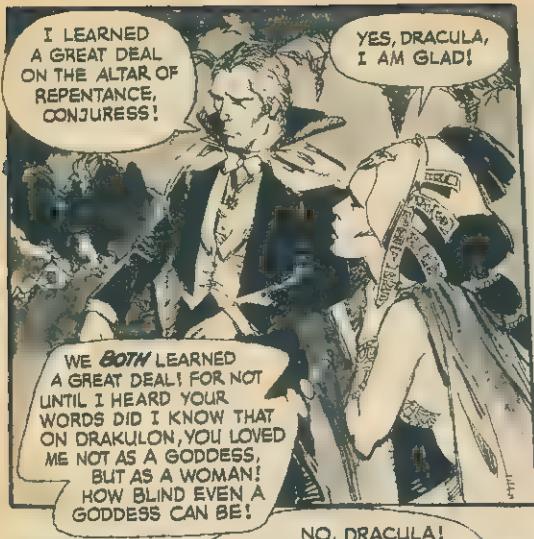


VAMPIRELLA RELATED HER TALE TO ADAM AND HIS FATHER...

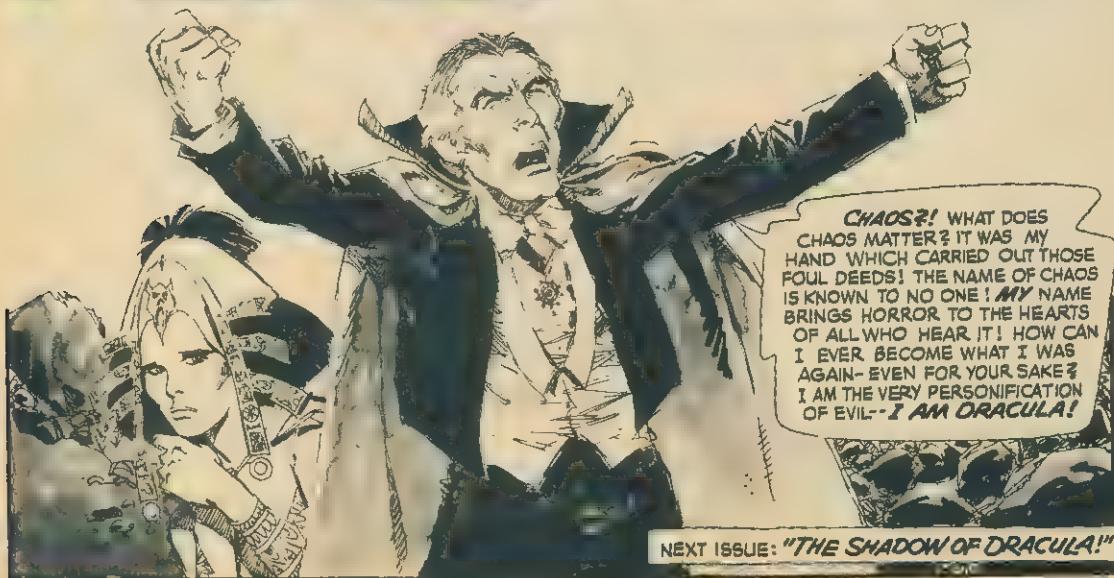


CONRAD BLURTS OUT HOW HE TRIED TO DESTROY MERLIN'S MIRROR, THEN DID DESTROY IT, ACCIDENTALLY...





AFTER SO MANY CENTURIES OF HORROR, SO MANY LIVES SNUFFED OUT BY MY HAND-- THERE IS LITTLE LEFT WORTH SAVING! HOW THEN CAN I BE REBORN? CAN MY SOUL EVER BE WASHED CLEAN OF THE BLOOD OF A THOUSAND INNOCENT VICTIMS?



KALI TOMB OF THE GODS



THE PAST LIES HIDDEN IN THE VAST RECESSES OF TIME AND SPACE, A THING UNKNOWN AMIDST THE EXPLOSIONS OF SULFUROUS FLAMES AND HOWLING GASSEOUS WINDS.



THE FORCE OF THE UNIVERSE IS SILENT NOW, AS IF CLUTCHING ITS SECRET TIGHTLY WITHIN... THE SECRET OF THE AGES.



SINCE TIME'S DAWNING, ONLY A CHOSEN FEW HAVE POSSESSED THE VERY SECRET OF LIFE ITSELF.



IN THE HANDS OF MEN, POWER CORRUPTS... BECOMES AN INSTRUMENT OF EVIL.

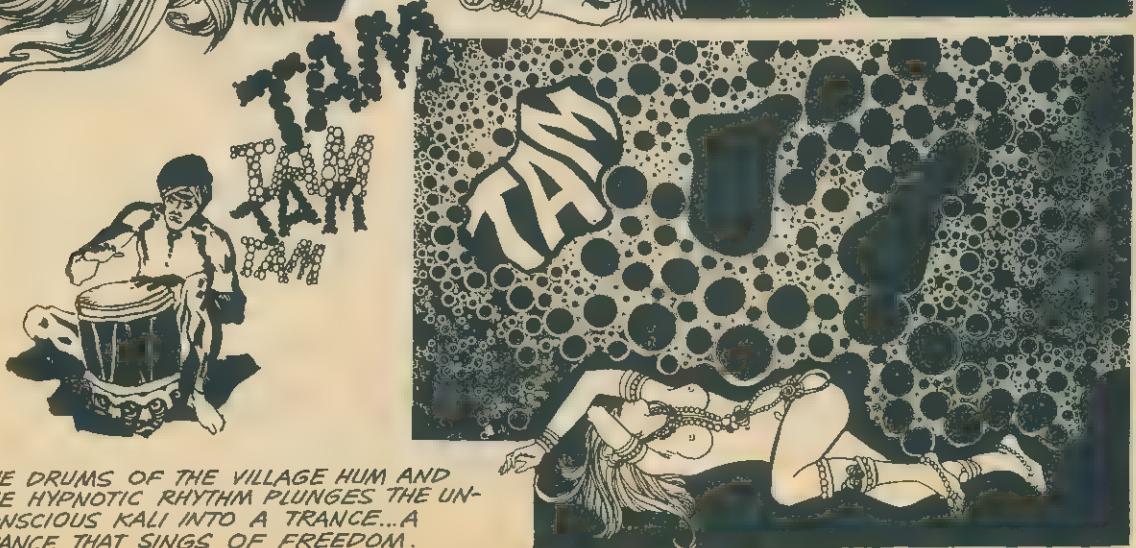
THERE IS MIGHTY
CALIGOR, MAGICIAN AND
MURDERER IN THE
CAUSE OF HEAVENLY
GOOD.



WITNESS THE MAIDEN KALI,
UNCONSCIOUS... A MOST HOSPITAL-
ABLE SACRIFICE. HER DEATH WILL
PLEASE THE GREAT GOD AGNI
AND GIVE US THE POWER
WE SEEK.



FOR SHE IS THE ESSENCE
OF LIFE ITSELF... WIND AND
FLOWERS, FRESH AND
YOUNG, OUR DUTY TO
GOD AGNI AWAITS.
LET US PREPARE THE
DEATH RITUAL.



THE DRUMS OF THE VILLAGE HUM AND
THE HYPNOTIC RHYTHM PLUNGES THE UN-
CONSCIOUS KALI INTO A TRANCE... A
TRANCE THAT SINGS OF FREEDOM.

HER SENSES DROWN
IN A SEA OF VISIONS.
FLUTTERING
HUMAN WINGS
PROMISE
ESCAPE.



OH, MAN MOST
BEAUTIFUL! SOON I
WILL POSSESS THOSE
WINGS AND BE ONE
WITH YOU!



AND I WILL LOVE
YOU IN RETURN... SUCH
LOVE AS YOU HAVE
NEVER KNOWN. SOON
I WILL BE AGNI'S
Bride AND YOUR
ETERNAL LOVE



BUT THE
DREAM, LIKE
ALL THINGS,
MUST FADE...



EYES LIKE BURNING COALS
TRANSFORM THE DREAM
INTO A BRUTAL REALITY.



FOR THE TIGERS ARE THE
INSTRUMENTS OF MAGICIAN
CALIGOR'S SELFISH PLAN.
THEY SIT CROUCHED,
AWAITING NIGHTFALL AND
A FEAST.



LET US GO, FELLOW TRIBESMEN.
I AM AWARE OF THE TIGERS. SOON
THEY WILL BEGIN MY WORK...
THE MIRACLE OF
THE SACRIFICE!



DEEP ROLLING GROWLS
AWAKEN THE MAIDEN
FROM HER TRANCE.

GREAT GOD AGNI! IS THIS
WHAT THE MAGICIAN CALIGOR
PROMISED ME? AM I TO
BE TRANSFORMED INTO A
FEAST FOR CRUEL
BEASTS?

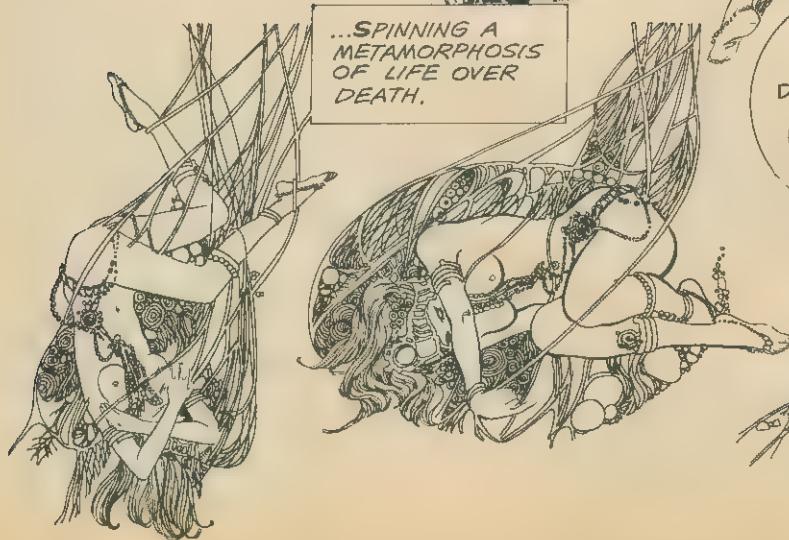
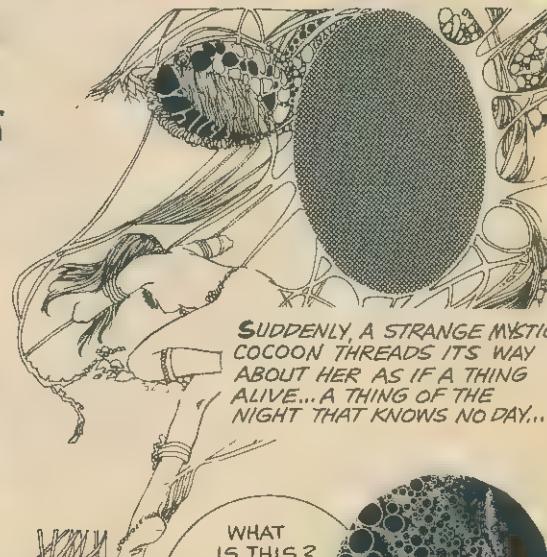


I WILL NOT RENOUNCE
MY LIFE FOR THE WHIM
OF A SELF-SERVING
GOD AND HIS EVIL
MAGICIAN!





SOMEWHERE IN THE VASTNESS KNOWN AS SPACE, THE SILENT CALL OF KALI IS HEARD. THE STRENGTH OF HER LIFE REVERBERATES LIKE A WAIL THROUGH THE COSMOS BECKONING TO THAT WHICH IS EVEN STRONGER THAN DEATH.



"I AM SMOOTHERING," SHE WHISPERS, "AS IF IN BIRTH... THOUGH I AM HELD BY NO CORD, ALREADY MY ARM FINDS FREEDOM."



THE PAIN OF RE-BIRTH COMPLETED, KALI EMERGES FROM HER SILKEN WOMB WITH POWERS YET UNKNOWN TO MORTAL MAN.



...THE WHISPER OF GRASS AND FLOWERS! WINDS OF LOVE! "WHY DO I LOVE YOU SO?"

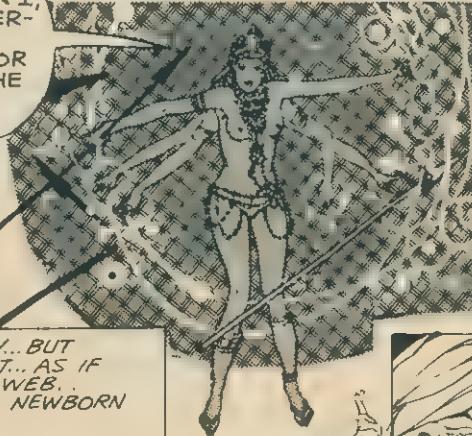


SHE RUNS TO THE VILLAGE SHOUTING, "I AM KALI! I HAVE RETURNED! COME FORTH, FRIENDS! AND I WILL TELL YOU OF THE TIGERS!"



BACK! KALI WILL NOT OFFER HER LIFE AGAIN! SHE HAS FOUND HER POWERS IN THE SACRIFICE!
KILL HER! SHE REFUSES TO BE AN OFFERING TO THE GODS!





WHY DO
YOU WAIT?
KILL HER!
THROW YOUR
SPEARS!

THE LANCES FLY... BUT
SUDDENLY HALT... AS IF
CAUGHT IN A WEB.
THE WEB OF A NEWBORN
GODDESS.



ENRAGED,
CALIGOR SPITS
FORTH THE
POISON DART...





ALL THINGS MUST
KNOW AN END...AN
END SOMETIME
KNOWN AS
DEATH

AND SO IT IS THAT THE MAGICIAN'S UNWITTING SKILL
HAS TRANSFORMED THE MAIDEN KALI INTO A GODDESS...
A GODDESS OF ETERNAL BEAUTY... THE WHEEL OF
DEATH AND REBIRTH ENCIRCLES ALL THAT IS MORTAL
WITH THE PROMISE OF IMMORTALITY.





PITY THE POOR PROTAGONIST OF THIS STORY, DAVID WINTERS, CAUGHT IN THE FILMY WEBBING OF LIFE... UNKNOWING OF THE MANY LIVES OF WOMEN...

DAVID WINTERS HAS PLAYED THIS SCENE BEFORE, ONLY THE BIT PLAYERS CHANGE THE CHOREOGRAPHY, THE BIT PLAYER THIS TIME IS HARRIET STONE.



PLAY IT COLD, PLAY IT HARD, RE-ENACT THAT FIRM, STIFF WALK, ONLY THE FAINT CHILL OF THE NIGHT AUTUMN AIR SUGGESTS THIS ISN'T THE SAME EPISODE STAGED THREE MONTHS BEFORE TO A WARM JULY EVENING.



THE TORN SOBBINGS, THE MASCARA BLED TEARS HAVE BEEN MIRRORED ON OTHER YOUNG FACES. IT IS HARDLY NOTICEABLE THAT OTHER LUNGS RIP OUT THESE SOBS, THAT NEW EYES SPILL THESE TEARS.



JUST PAINT TREMORS ABOUT THE FINGERS BETRAY ANY EMOTION TO THE ABRUPT TERMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP, A TYPICAL REACTION.

IT DOESN'T GET ANY MORE DIFFICULT, JUST THE FAMILIAR NAGGING DREAD OF THE PARTING SCENE. NO SWEET SORROW HERE, BABY!



"SONG OF A SAD-EYED SORCERESS"

THE LAST THOUGHT FADES TO NEW STIMULI. WINTERS SEES ONLY THE SWEEP OF HER BACK, THE GRACEFUL FALL OF HER HAIR, AND YET SOMETHING CATCHES IN HIS THROAT AND A STRANGE SCENT CATCHES AT HIS NOSTRILS.



WHO..... WHO ARE YOU?



YOU WISH TO KNOW WHO I AM, DAVID WINTERS?

I AM NAHEMAH! AND BEFORE THIS NIGHT IS THROUGH YOU WILL KNOW ME LIKE YOU HAVE KNOWN NO OTHER WOMAN!

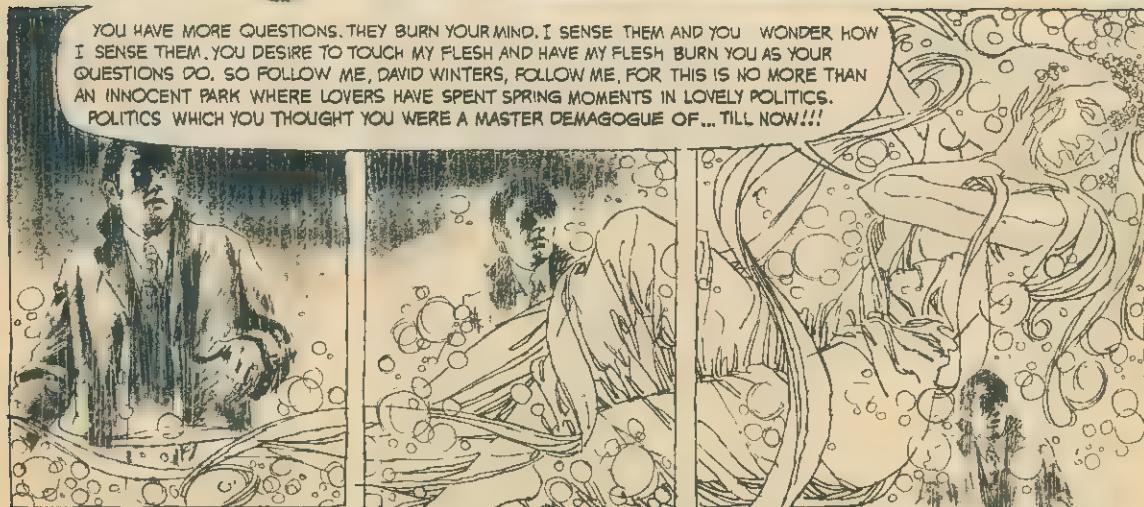
THAT I CAN PROMISE YOU, DAVID WINTERS!

HARRIET STONE HAD ONLY BEEN WORKING FOR KELLY AND LISSON, INC. FOR LITTLE OVER A WEEK WHEN DAVID WINTERS HAD FIRST WALKED INTO HER LIFE, DELIVERING ONE OF THOSE SMUG, ARTIFICIAL SMILES, SHE ASSUMED, THAT HE USUALLY DELIVERED IN EXECUTIVE SUITES AND SHE HAD BEEN ALSO AWARE THAT HE WAS NOT ONLY ON THE MAKE IN A BUSINESS SENSE, HIS ENTIRE LIFE STYLE WAS ONE CONTINUOUS "MAKE-IT" DRIVE.



THAT HAD BEEN HER FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH DAVID WINTERS. IN FACT, IT HAD BEEN HER FIRST ACTUAL ENCOUNTER WITH ANYBODY IN NEW YORK CITY SINCE HER ARRIVAL. SHE HAD LOOKED INTO THE DUSTY MIRROR EACH MORNING, ASSURING HERSELF THAT SHE HAD NO STARS IN HER EYES, THAT SHE WAS TOUGH AND SELF-RELIANT; BUT AS THE NIGHT CITY SOUNDS DRIFTED UP INTO HER TENEMENT ROOM THE RETURN LOOK WAS NOT AS FIRM, AND - DESPITE THE NEAR RELIGIOUS LECTURES SHE HAD PREACHED SILENTLY TO HERSELF - DAVID WINTERS BECAME THE FIRST RECOGNIZABLE FACE.

THE STING OF THE AUTUMN WIND SHARPENS ON HIS CHEEKS AS HE STEPS FORWARD. A DIM VOICE PLEADS WITH HIM NOT TO TAKE THE STEP, BUT HIS MOVEMENTS ARE NOT OF HIS OWN VOLITION.



YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS. THEY BURN YOUR MIND. I SENSE THEM AND YOU WONDER HOW I SENSE THEM. YOU DESIRE TO TOUCH MY FLESH AND HAVE MY FLESH BURN YOU AS YOUR QUESTIONS DO. SO FOLLOW ME, DAVID WINTERS, FOLLOW ME, FOR THIS IS NO MORE THAN AN INNOCENT PARK WHERE LOVERS HAVE SPENT SPRING MOMENTS IN LOVELY POLITICS. POLITICS WHICH YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE A MASTER DEMAGOGUE OF... TILL NOW!!!

THE WEEKS HAD PASSED -- LONE, SOLITARY WEEKS SPLINTERED WITH BRIEF MOMENTS OF HUMAN CONTACT DURING OFFICE HOURS; AND HARRIET STONE HAD REALIZED THAT SHE HAD NEVER BEEN IN THE MIDST OF SO MANY PEOPLE, NOR HAD SHE EVER BEEN SO ALONE.

JUST DON'T GET ANY WEIRD IDEAS, DAVID.

SHE HAD KNOWN DAVID WINTERS' GAME: SHE HAD KNOWN HE WAS TRYING TO SCORE ALL THROUGH THOSE UNCTUOUS MONOLOGUES THAT HE DELIVERED. YET, FINALLY, TO COMPENSATE FOR THE HOSTILITY AND ALONENESS, SHE YIELDED, ONE MEETING LEADING TO ANOTHER, BOTH OF THEM PLAYING THE USUAL MALE-FEMALE POLITICS....

WHO ME? WOULD I DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

BEYOND THAT, THESE CO-WORKERS OF HERS GOT ALL THE BREAKS AND BENEFITS WHICH ADDED TO HER LAMENT.

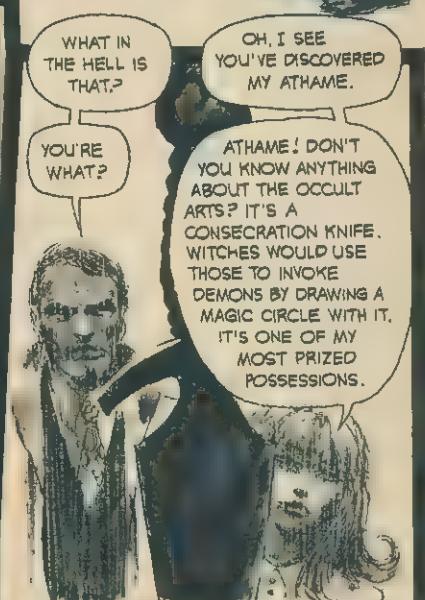
....UNTIL THAT NIGHT SHE HAD INVITED HIM TO HER APARTMENT.

QUITE A PAD YOU'VE GOT HERE, AND LISTEN, I'M SORRY ABOUT THE COME-ON THE PAST FEW WEEKS. GUESS IT'S THE PRESSURE, YOU KNOW?

CHANGE OF TACT, DAVID?

LISTEN, HARRIET, YOU'VE GOT THE MOST SUSPICIOUS MIND THAT...

YES, I THINK YOU WOULD. STAY HERE WHILE I FIX US A DRINK IN THE KITCHEN. HAVE A LOOK AROUND.



HARRIET STONE HAD LISTENED TO WINTERS REPLY, STILL AWARE AS TO HIS NATURE, SHE HAD REMAINED STOIC, UNATTAINABLE THROUGH-OUT HIS SOPHISTICATED RAP, PLEASED THAT ANOTHER PERSON SHARED THE ROOM FOR THE MOMENT; AND SHE HAD ALSO BEEN AWARE THAT HER PASSION FOR THE OCCULT WAS A FACET OF HER WINTERS HAD NEVER SUSPECTED.....

....AND THROUGHOUT THAT EVENING HE COULD NEVER REALLY FORGET THE BLADE OF ATHAME RESTING UNDER THE FLOOR-LAMP.

TWO SECTIONS OF WINTER'S MIND BATTLE FOR DOMINANCE. ONE SECTION IS FILLED WITH THE FLEEING SPECTRE BEFORE HIM, BUT THE OTHER SECTION IS GRIPPING AT SOME THIN EDGE OF NORMALITY.



WHO IS THIS CREATURE WHO BECKONS AND SWAYS BEFORE HIM, ENTICING HIM ONWARD WITH EVERY FLUID MOVEMENT, EACH SUPPLE CURVE DEMANDING OBEDIENCE? IS HE FALLING PREY TO SOME PSYCHOTIC FEAR OF WOMEN THAT HE HAS HELD IN CHECK DURING HIS ENTIRE LIFE?

BUT THAT IS FOOLISHNESS. YET, IF IT IS FOOLISHNESS, THEN WHY CAN'T HE STOP HIS FEET FROM MOVING OUT ONTO THAT BRIDGE? WHY IS THE DESIRE TO POSSESS BURNING SO FERVENTLY IN HIS VEINS? AND NAHEMAM, SHE IS LIKE SOME SYMBOLIC LIFE-FORM WHOSE CREATION AND PURPOSE HAS BEEN LOST IN THE PASSAGE OF TIME. WHY IS THAT?



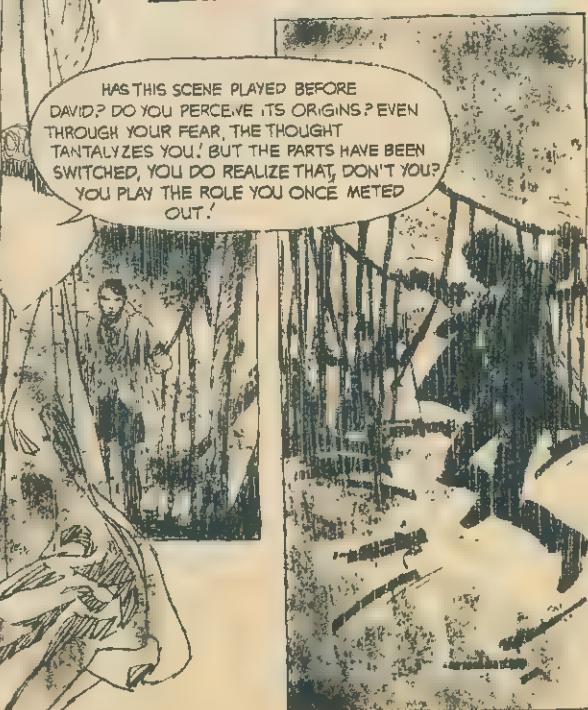
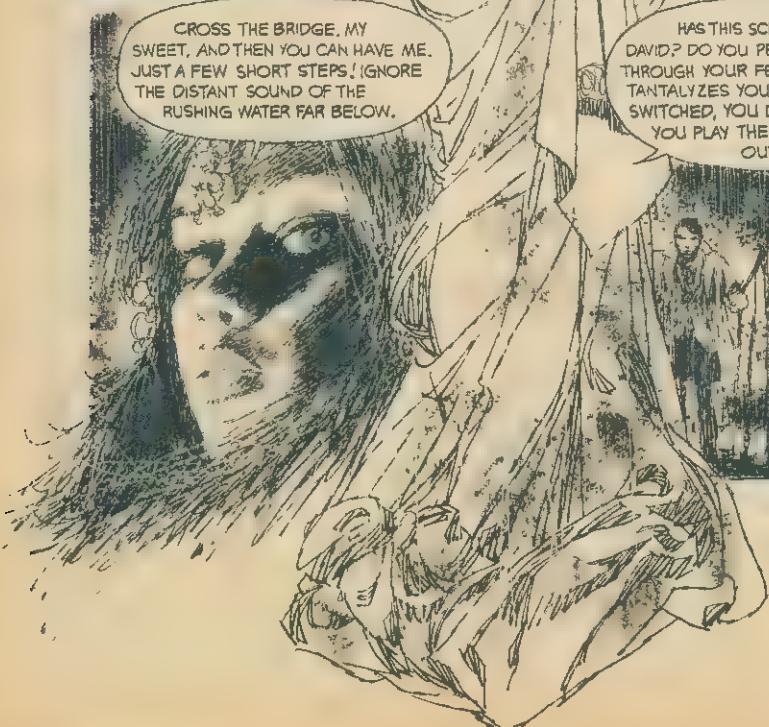
FOLLOW ME, DAVID WINTERS, FOR OUR MEETING IS PREORDAINED.

I SENSE THE FEAR THAT CUTS YOUR HEART! IT MINGLES WITH YOUR DESIRE FOR ME! BUT FIRST YOU MUST COME TO ME.



CROSS THE BRIDGE, MY SWEET, AND THEN YOU CAN HAVE ME. JUST A FEW SHORT STEPS! IGNORE THE DISTANT SOUND OF THE RUSHING WATER FAR BELOW.

HAS THIS SCENE PLAYED BEFORE DAVID? DO YOU PERCEIVE ITS ORIGINS? EVEN THROUGH YOUR FEAR, THE THOUGHT TANTALIZES YOU! BUT THE PARTS HAVE BEEN SWITCHED, YOU DO REALIZE THAT, DON'T YOU? YOU PLAY THE ROLE YOU ONCE METED OUT!



HARRIET STONE HAD PLAYED THE GAME, FOLLOWING THE PRESCRIBED FORMULA, INCLUDING ALL THE TENTATIVE MOVES AND DOUBLE ENTENDRES.

SHE HAD PLAYED THE GAME AND PLAYED IT WELL, TRYING TO REMAIN AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THAT WAS ALL IT WAS: A GAME.

IT HAD BEEN THE COMMON NEED, THE ONE TRAIT THAT LINKED THEM, WHICH HAD FINALLY COMPLETED THE CHARADE.



SHE HAD HEARD HERSELF UTTERING WORDS THAT WERE SCHOOL-GIRL TEXT, WORDS SHE HAD KNOWN BETTY FRIEDAN WOULD M FROWN UPON; AND SHE FELT ALTERNATE SENSATIONS — A MINGLING OF NEED WITH A FEELING OF FAILURE.



THE SOFT, MELLOW SOUNDS OF FRANK SINATRA CROONING LOST LOVE IN THE BACKGROUND HAD ADDED THE FINAL TOUCH TO THE SCENE. SHE HAD WONDERED HOW MANY SUCH SCENES HAD BEEN PRESIDED OVER, VOCALLY, BY THE KING.

LISTEN, WE BOTH NEED IT, RIGHT? YOU KNOW YOU REALLY WANT THIS.

AND SHE HAD STILL KNOWN THAT IT WAS ONLY A GAME, BUT THERE WAS ONE SLIGHT CHANGE: SHE HAD BEEN WISHING THAT PART OF IT COULD BE... REAL



I JUST DON'T WANT TO BE HURT, THAT'S ALL.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN DAVID, I JUST WANT SOME PART OF ME LEFT, SOME PART OF ME THAT'S MINE ALONE.



NO ONE'S GOIN' TO HURT YOU, HONEY. THAT'S NO JIVE.

RIGHT NOW, I WANT YOU, BABY!



S

THE WIND LIFTS, CARRYING NAHEMAH'S CARRESSING VOICE TO HIM, THE WORDS A CHANTING MOCKERY AS THE Gaping CHASM BELOW GRIPS AT THE CENTER OF WINTER S STOMACH

HOW MANY SONGS HAVE YOU LISTENED TO, YET NEVER HEARD THE LYRICS?

YET, THERE IS A POWER GREATER THAN THAT OF THE YAWNING ABYSS; AND IT IS MIRRORED IN NAHEMAH'S EYES, A KINDLING SPARK THAT DISRUPTS THE NIGHT AIR AND SEARS HIS FLESH. SOME BASIC PART OF HIM FIGHTS TO RETAIN HIS IDENTITY.

WHAT WHISPERED HOPES ENFLAMED ON YOUR COVENANT WASHED TO DYING EMBERS?

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?.....SERMONNETTES?

THAT'S ONE DAMNED THING I DON T NEED, SISTER! YOU BROADS ARE ALL ALIKE!

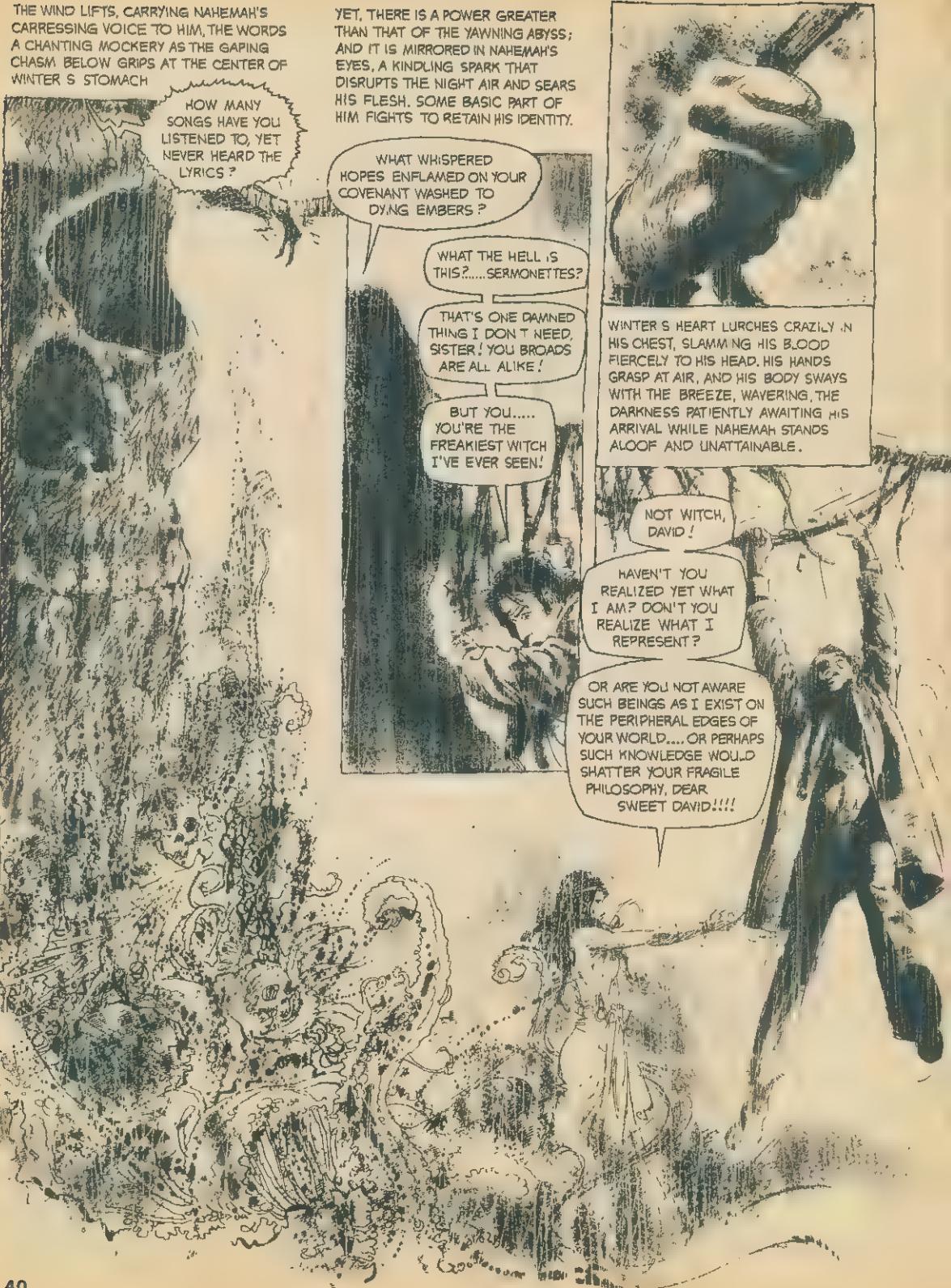
BUT YOU..... YOU'RE THE FREAKIEST WITCH I'VE EVER SEEN!

WINTER S HEART LURCHES CRAZILY IN HIS CHEST, SLAMMING HIS BLOOD FIERCELY TO HIS HEAD, HIS HANDS GRASP AT AIR, AND HIS BODY SWAYS WITH THE BREEZE, WAVERING, THE DARKNESS PATIENTLY AWAITING HIS ARRIVAL WHILE NAHEMAH STANDS ALOOF AND UNATTAINABLE.

NOT WITCH, DAVID!

HAVEN'T YOU REALIZED YET WHAT I AM? DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT I REPRESENT?

OR ARE YOU NOT AWARE SUCH BEINGS AS I EXIST ON THE PERIPHERAL EDGES OF YOUR WORLD....OR PERHAPS SUCH KNOWLEDGE WOULD SHATTER YOUR FRAGILE PHILOSOPHY, DEAR SWEET DAVID!!!!



HARRIET HAD SEEN THE MECHANISMS AT WORK. SHE HAD KNOWN WHAT FUNCTIONS EACH MOVEMENT WINTERS SUPPLIED MEANT. YET, SHE HAD IGNORED THEM, DESIRING INSTEAD A TIME OF RELIANCE TO SELF-RELIANCE. SHE DESERVED THAT MUCH, SHE HAD SOOTHED HERSELF, AWARE THERE WOULD COME A TIME WHEN SHE WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR THAT CONVENIENCE.



WINTERS HOVERS AT THE
BRINK WITH DEATH AND LIFE
WAITING ON THE SIDES. HE
HAS NEVER BEEN THIS
CLOSE TO DEATH BEFORE
AND YET THERE IS STILL A
CURIOUS SENSATION THAT
IT IS HAPPENING TO
SOMEONE ELSE.



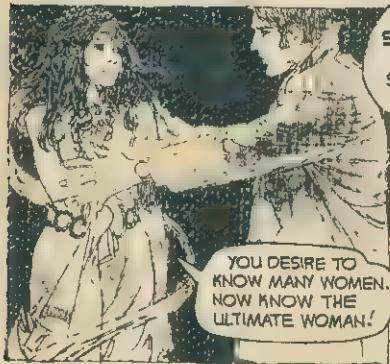
A TENTATIVE STEP, THE
FEAR STILL CLUTCHING
AT HIS INSIDES, AND HIS
BALANCE IS RESTORED.



THE TERROR SUBSIDES IN HIS BREAST AS HE CONTINUES ACROSS
THE TERMITE AND WEATHER-EATEN BRIDGE.



NAHEMAM'S UNEARTHLY BEAUTY RESUMES
ITS HOLD. HE HAS NEVER SEEN
ANYTHING LIKE HER BEFORE, YET AT
THE SAME TIME HE HAS KNOWN
SEPARATE PARTS OF HER.



DO YOU KNOW OF THE
EMPUSA? ANCIENT AND
LOVING FEMALE DEMONS
SUMMONED FORTH WITH
THE ATHAME BLADE!



HE WANTS TO RUN; HE WANTS TO CONQUER HER.
FOR ONE FIERCE MOMENT, AS HE GRIPS THE
UNEARTHLY BEAUTY TO HIM HE REGAINS HIS
FORMER CONFIDENCE AND CLUTCHES HER
BRUTALLY.



HIS COMMAND IS SHORT-LIVED,
FOLLOWED WITH A LAUGHTER THAT
WHIPS ON THE COLD NIGHT WIND AND
TEARS AT HIS EARS.

WITH THE

POWER TO TURN YOUR
LUST.....



SATIN FLESH TURN TO SCALEY COILS
BENEATH HIS FINGERS. SOFT
WARMTH BLENDS TO SERPENTINE
CHILL.



.... TO
REVULSION!!!!

THE CHANGE SHREDS WINTER'S SANITY, HIS
ENTIRE BEING RIPPED OPEN AND EXPOSED WITH A
MIND THAT SEEKS DESPERATELY TO COMPREHEND
WHAT CANNOT BE COMPREHENDED.





OH, SACRED DAUGHTER
OF HECATE, PRINCESS OF
THE SUCCUBAI....



COME FORTH INTO
THIS WORLD OF
PLASTIC...



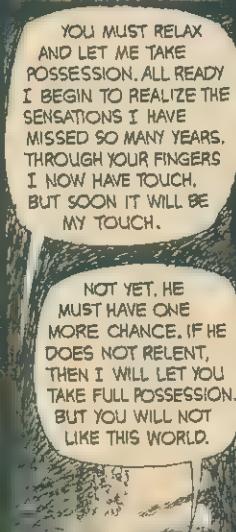
COME FORTH INTO THIS
WORLD OF OVER-POPULATION
WHERE LONELINESS AND
ALIENATION ARE DEEPER
THAN EVER.



AND FEEL THE
HURT OF YOUR FLESH AND
BLOOD SISTERS AS YOU
ENTER MY BEING, FEEL THAT
HURT AND SEEK
JUSTIFICATION.



I AM
HERE, HARRIET
STONE.



I CAN SENSE
IT. MY MIND IS
ONE WITH YOURS.
THEY MINGLE.



YOU MUST RELAX
AND LET ME TAKE
POSSESSION. ALL READY
I BEGIN TO REALIZE THE
SENSATIONS I HAVE
MISSSED SO MANY YEARS.
THROUGH YOUR FINGERS
I NOW HAVE TOUCH,
BUT SOON IT WILL BE
MY TOUCH.



NOT YET. HE
MUST HAVE ONE
MORE CHANCE. IF HE
DOES NOT RELENT,
THEN I WILL LET YOU
TAKE FULL POSSESSION.
BUT YOU WILL NOT
LIKE THIS WORLD.



YOU SAY IT IS IMPERSONAL.
BUT THERE ARE SO MANY
OF YOU



YES, BUT IT IS
THAT WAY. AND CRUEL.
I SOMETIMES WONDER
HOW ANYONE CAN
WANT TO LIVE IN THIS
JUNGLE, THIS SOOT
AND GRIME.



BUT NOW YOU
ARE WITHIN ME, SISTER,
AND I FEEL A ONENESS
WITH YOU!

NAHEMAH EXULTS IN THE PANIC SHE CAUSES. SIBILANT Hisses SPLIT THE AIR IN SERPENTINE LAUGHTER.

SHE IS ALIVE ONCE MORE. EVEN THE
ESSENCE OF FOULED AIR TINGLES AT
HER NOSTRILS... AND HE KNOWS
A FEAR BORN OF THE
ANCESTORS!

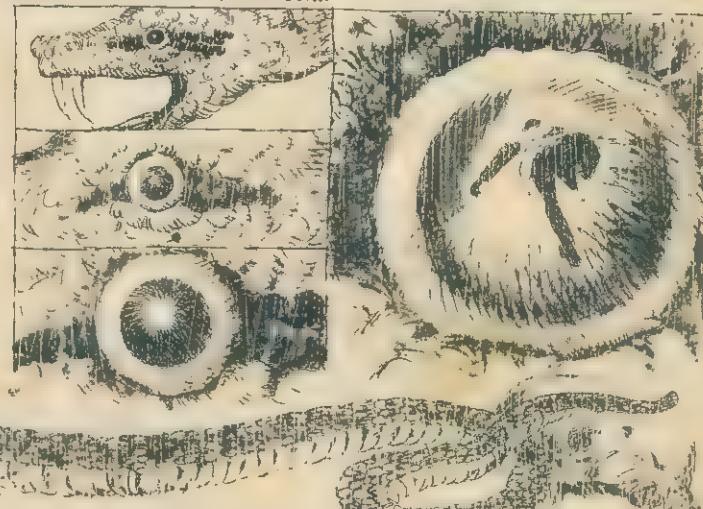


COLD, REPTILIAN EYES WATCH WITH A GLINT OF AMUSEMENT AS THE BROKEN MALE FIGURE HURLES AWAY CARELESSLY...

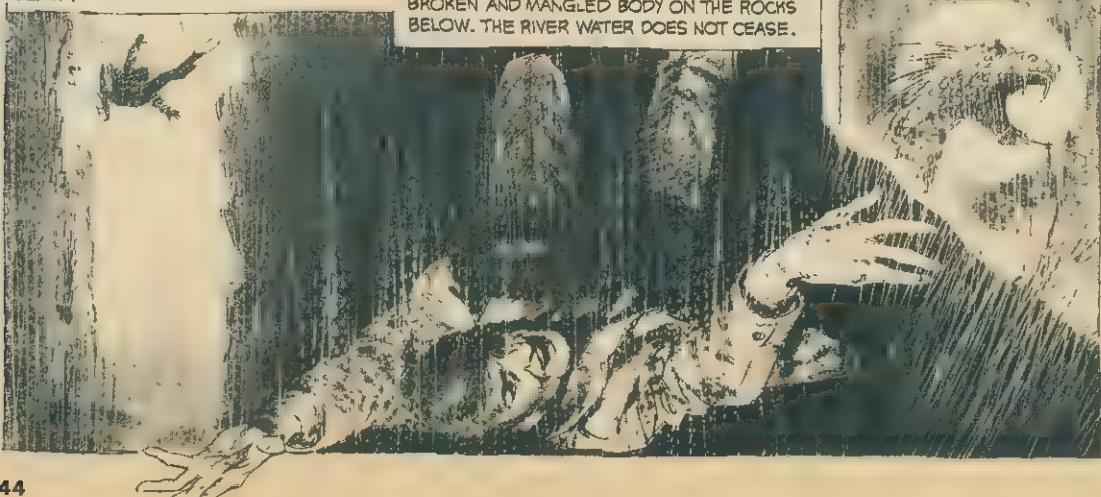
AND THEN SHE RELEASES HIM, BONES
SNAPPED ALONG WITH SPIRIT.



AND FALLS OVER THE EDGE OF EARTH,
COLLIDING HARD AGAINST THE GROUND AND
THEN FALLING OUTWARD, SPINNING, INTO
THE RUSH OF AIR, HURTLING TOWARD HIS
DEATH.



THE MALE HUMAN'S SCREAMS FADE QUICKLY.
THE ONLY TESTIMONY TO THE EVENTS IS THE
BROKEN AND MANGLED BODY ON THE ROCKS
BELOW. THE RIVER WATER DOES NOT CEASE.



IT WAS ALL
SO HORRIBLE.....

I SHOULDN'T HAVE
DONE IT, NAHEMATH!
WHY DID YOU LET ME
DO IT?

YOU ALWAYS COMPLAIN,
HARRIET STONE! YOU BASK
IN YOUR SELF-MADE
REALITY OF MISERY AND
SELF-PITY!

SELF-PITY! NO!
YOU'RE WRONG:
I WAS JUSTIFIED:

MANY OF YOUR
RACE JUSTIFY THEIR
UNspoken, NEARLY
UNALTERABLE RULE:
THAT THEY ARE
DETERMINED TO SEEK
THEIR OWN BRAND
OF HELL!

BUT I WAS USED!
I DID NOT MAKE THAT
UP!

AGREED. IN THIS
INSTANCE, BUT IT IS
NOT THE MOMENTARY
SELF-PITY THAT IS DESPICABLE,
IT IS THOSE WHO MAKE A LIFE-
STYLE OF CURSING OTHERS
FOR THEIR FAILURES!

GIVE ME
BACK MY BODY,
NAHEMATH!!

IF I ALLOWED YOU BACK,
YOU WOULD CONTINUE TO
DREAM DREAMS OF DESPAIR.
YOU WOULD NOT ENJOY
THESE SENSATIONS... **YOU
WOULD CONTINUE TO
WAIL YOUR SAD-EYE
SYMPHONY. VERSES
RHymED TO CONSOLE
ONLY YOURSELF!**

BUT BELIEVE ME
HARRIET, I SHALL ENJOY
EACH PERCEPTION.

I REALLY
SHALL!!!

I AM AFRAID THAT IS
IMPOSSIBLE. IF YOU HAD
BEEN UNABLE TO TOUCH
ANYTHING FOR CENTURIES,
YOU WOULD KNOW WHAT I
MEAN! NOW I CAN TASTE, I CAN
FEEL! THERE ARE OTHER MEN
OUT THERE OF DIFFERENT
CALIBERS THAN THIS ONE I
JUST SLEW! I WILL KNOW
SOME OF THEM. THEY WILL
COME TO ME!

JUST A LITTLE LESSON
TAKEN OUT OF THE ARCHIVES,
FIEND READERS, SO
REMEMBER, THE NEXT TIME
YOU'RE OUT ON THE STREETS
SEEKING TO USE SOMEONE,
IT JUST MIGHT BE SOMEONE
THAT WILL USE YOU! SWEET
FANTASIES!!!

BUT RALPH,
WHY DIDN'T YOU
CHECK THE GAS
GAUGE **BEFORE**
WE LEFT...?

SHUDDUP, JEAN! I'VE HAD
ENOUGH OF YOUR BELLY-
ACHING TO LAST ME THE
NEXT TWENTY YEARS!

THE ROAD WAS DARK, AND DESOLATE. NO CARBON-COPY GAS STATIONS -- WITH THEIR FAMILIAR PINBALL-MACHINE-LIKE FLASHING LIGHTS -- INTERRUPTED ITS BLEAK LENGTH ...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO
GET SO **NASTY** ABOUT
IT -- I'M FRIGHTENED
ENOUGH AS IT IS... OUT
HERE IN THE MIDDLE
OF NOWHERE... IN
THE DARK...

READY FOR SOME DIRE DOLLOPS OF
DIABOLICAL DASTARDLINESS, CONNOISEURS?
LET'S JOIN RALPH AND JEAN AS THEY
INEXTRICABLY ENMESH THEMSELVES IN
A LITTLE DRAMA CALLED...

**WON'T
GET
FOOLED
AGAIN**

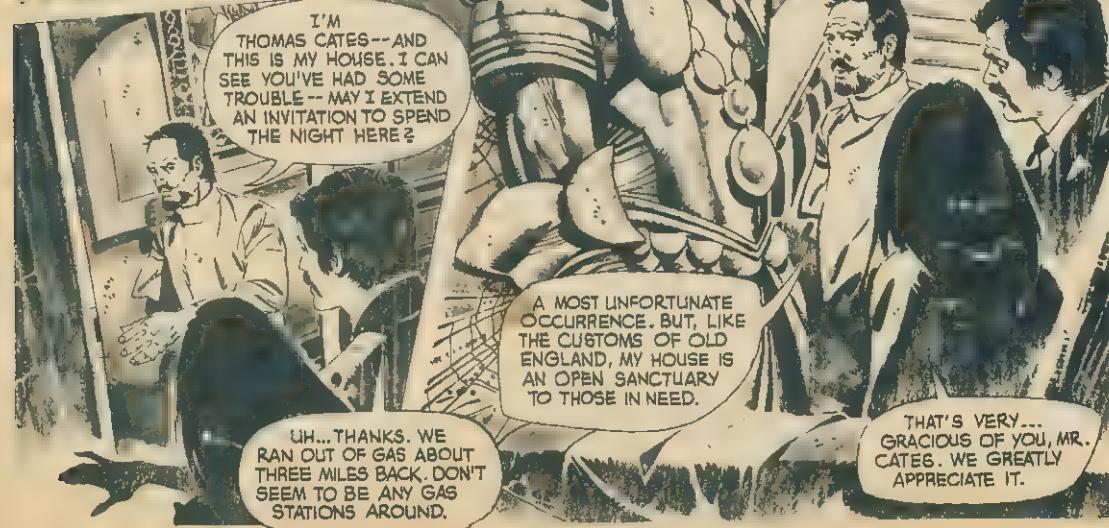
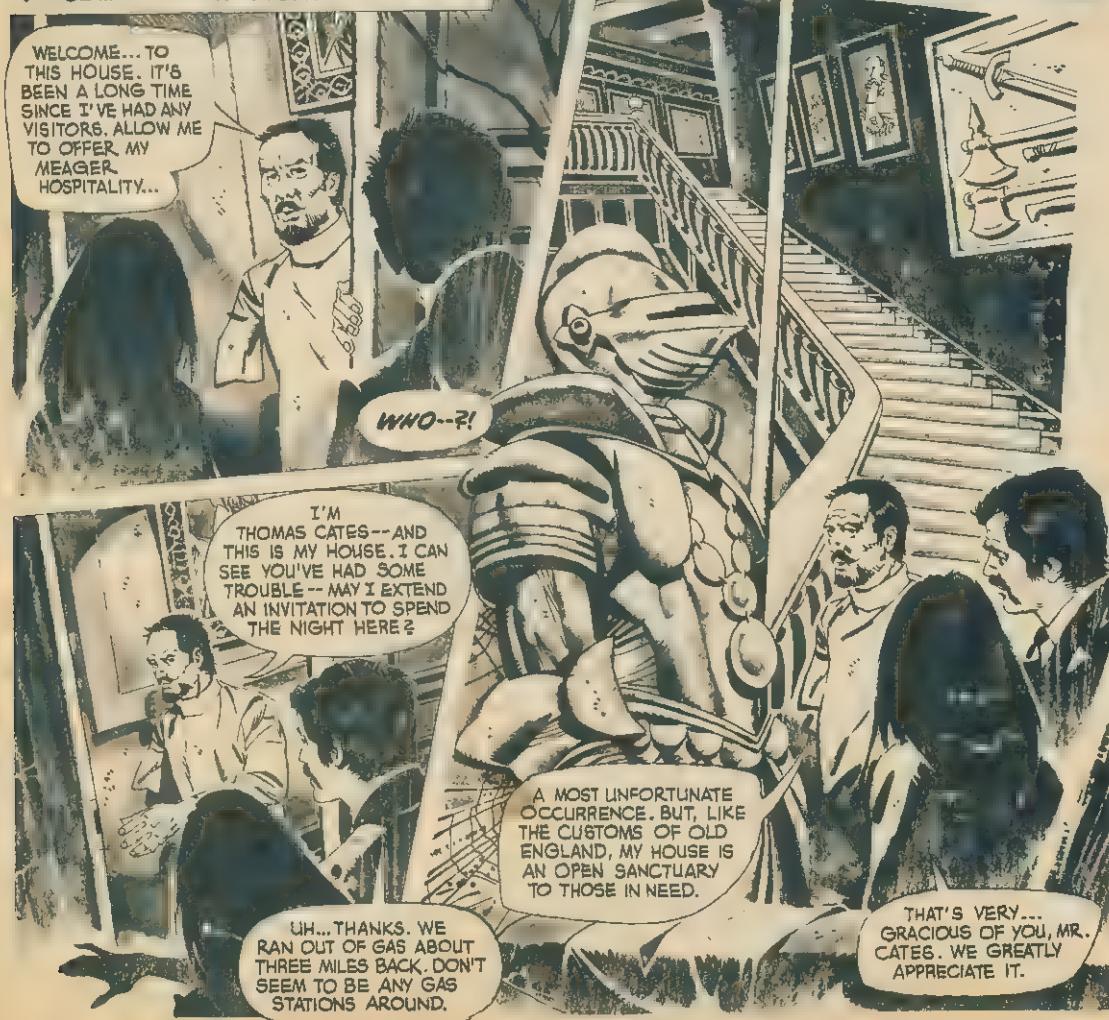
ISOLATED, BROODING, DECREPIT,
THE ANCIENT MANSION STOOD
TENUOUSLY -- YET DEFINITELY --
ON ITS TERMITE-INFESTED
FOUNDATIONS. ITS GABLED
ROOF SEEMED TO SAG WITH
THE WEIGHT OF A CENTURY --
ITS WALLS WERE WEARY WITH
DURESS. ITS FAÇADE OF
RESPECTABILITY WAS
TARNISHED WITH THE TRUTH
OF TIME, AND ITS APPEARANCE
SPOKE OF IMPENDING
RUINATION...

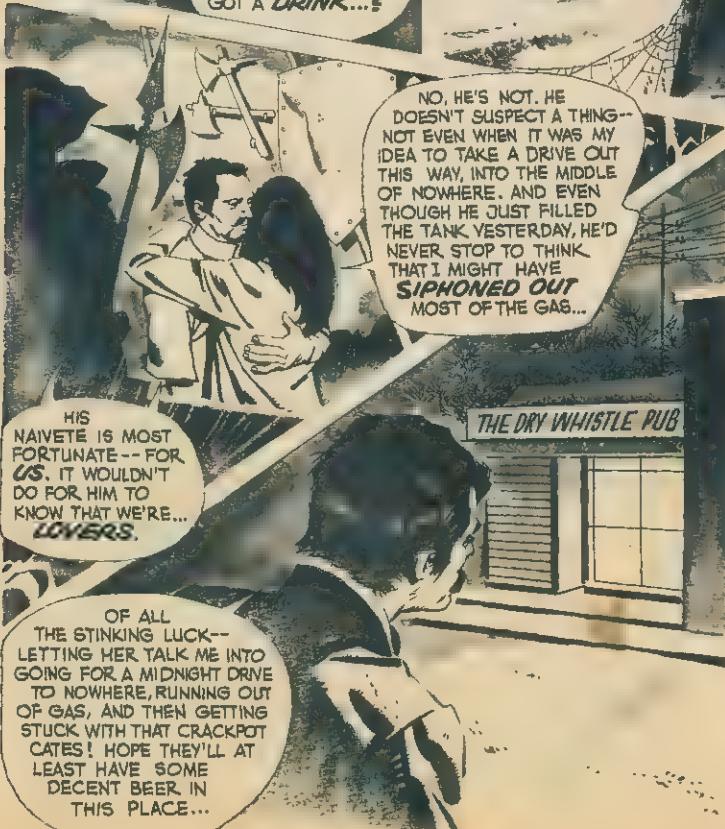
RALPH, YOU'RE **NOT**
THINKING OF STAYING
IN **THIS** CREEPY
PLACE...? I MEAN, I
JUST **COULDN'T**...

YOU'RE JUST NOT
GOING TO **QUIT**, ARE
YOU? YOU'RE GOING TO
KEEP RIGHT ON HARPING
AWAY UNTIL YOUR TONGUE
FALLS OUT! I SWEAR,
SOMETIMES I COULD...



THE WHISPERING
HUSH OF THE OPENING DOOR IS
INPERCEPTIBLE AND THUS UNNOTICED -- BUT THE
VOICE... THE VOICE COMMANDS ATTENTION...



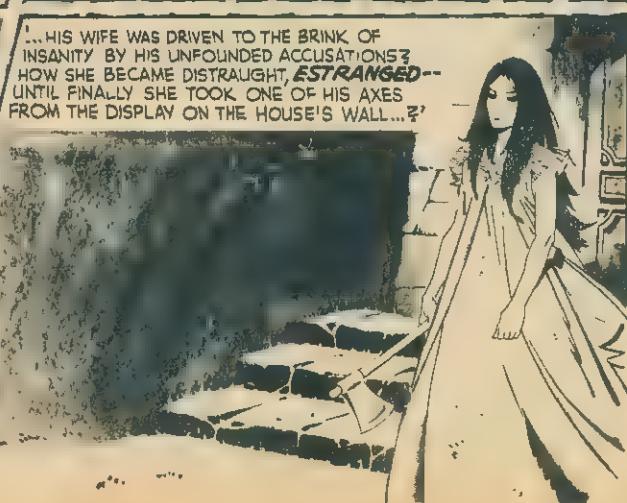
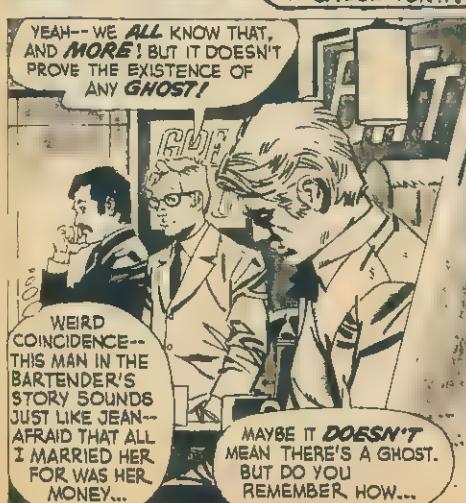




'HE HAD A VOLATILE TEMPER-- AND EXERCISED IT RELIGIOUSLY. PERHAPS HE FELT INFERIOR OR INCOMPETENT FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON...'



'THIS UNFOUNDED JEALOUSY DROVE HIM TO ELABORATE PRECAUTIONS. HE HAD HIS WIFE'S ROOM GUARDED AT ALL TIMES -- BUT ONLY BY EUNUCHS. HE DESTROYED HIS WILL WHICH HAD PROVIDED FOR THE BEQUEATHMENT OF HIS ENTIRE FORTUNE TO HIS WIFE...'



'...AND HOW SHE STEALTHILY CREEPT DOWN THE DARKENED CORRIDORS, FIERCELY GRIPPING THAT AXE, TO HER SLEEPING HUSBAND'S BEDROOM...?'

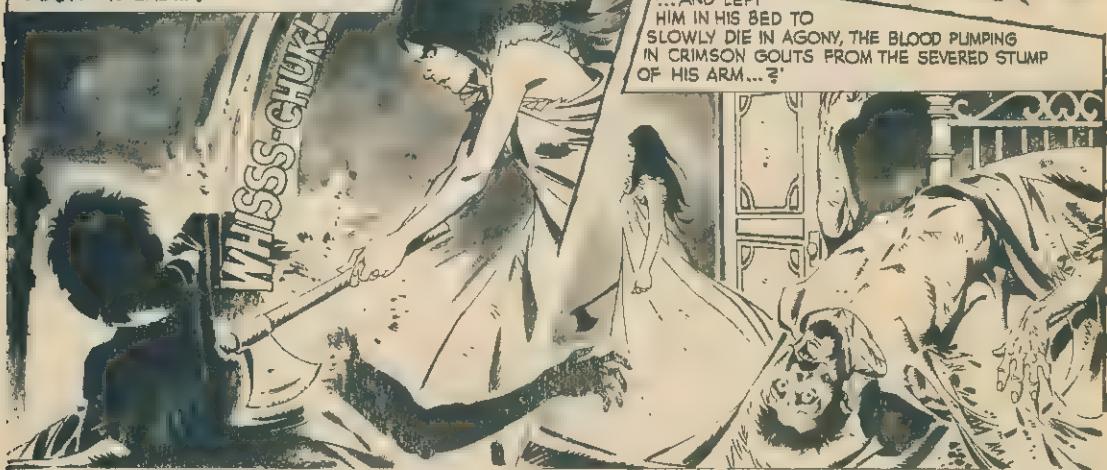


'...AND HOW SHE DESCENDED INTO A FRENZY OF BERSERK BLOODLUST, BUT FAILED TO DECAPITATE HIM-- CUTTING OFF HIS ARM INSTEAD ...?'

'...HOW SHE INTENDED TO BEHEAD HIM-- NOT FOR HIS MONEY, BUT BECAUSE HE HAD DRIVEN HER INSANE...?'



'...AND LEFT HIM IN HIS BED TO SLOWLY DIE IN AGONY, THE BLOOD PLUMPING IN CRIMSON GOUTS FROM THE SEVERED STUMP OF HIS ARM...?'

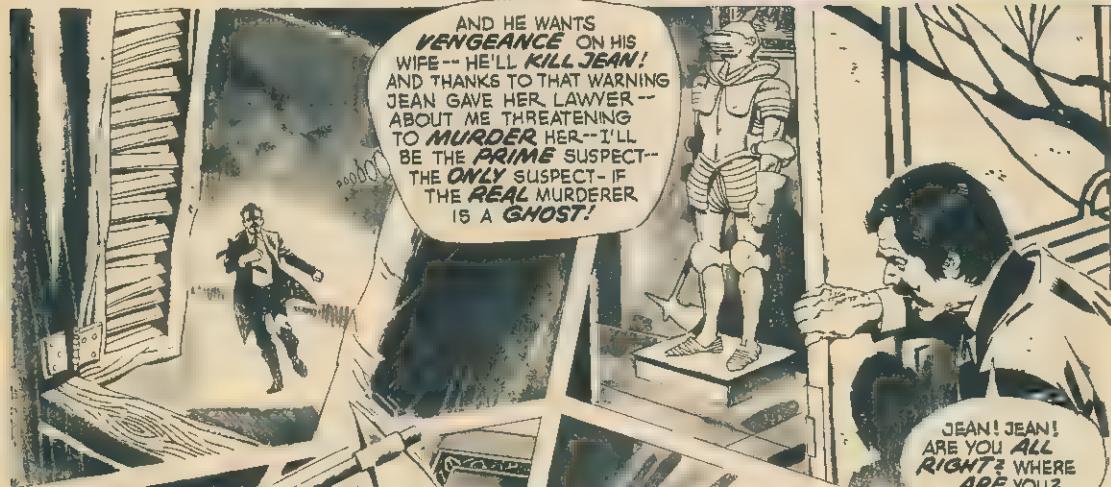


AND NOW-- A CENTURY LATER--
LIGHTS HAVE BEEN SEEN IN THE HOUSE. PEOPLE SAY THE GHOST OF THOMAS CATES HAS RETURNED TO HIS RUN-DOWN MANSION-- TO WREAK HORRIBLE VENGEANCE UPON HIS WIFE !

PEOPLE WHO SEE LIGHTS IN THE CATES HOUSE ARE SEEING THE EFFECTS OF TOO MUCH LIQUOR IN **YOUR PUB!** BESIDES, CATES' WIFE HAS BEEN DEAD FOR EIGHTY YEARS !

THAT'S RIGHT, STRANGER-- AND FOLKS SAY HIS DEMENTED LOVE LIVES ON, THAT HIS LOVE IS **VENGEANCE** THAT'S NEVER FREE...







YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
YOU'LL GET THE CHAIR
FOR THIS!

COME ALONG
NOW-- YOU'LL BE
ALLOWED ONE PHONE
CALL TO YOUR **LAWYER**
WHEN WE GET TO THE
STATION...

FINALLY! THOUGHT
I'D SUFFOCATE IN THIS
BLOODY SUIT-OF-ARMOR!
BUT IT WAS **WORTH IT**--
THE PLAN WENT LIKE
CLOCKWORK! YOUR CALL
TO THE POLICE WAS
TIMED **PERFECTLY**.

PROVIDING I MADE
FREQUENT VISITS TO HIM OUT
HERE IN THIS LOATHSOME HOUSE.
SOMETIMES I WONDERED IF
IT WAS **WORTH IT**...

WELL, YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO DO IT
AGAIN NOW THAT CATES HAS BEEN CUT UP
INTO LITTLE PIECES! NICE THAT HE SHOULD
BE CRAZY ENOUGH TO MAKE OUT HIS WILL
WITH **YOU AS BENEFICIARY**...

RIGHT. AND SINCE RALPH
WAS THOUGHTFUL ENOUGH TO
KILL CATES, I CAN COLLECT THE
INHERITANCE -- AND RALPH'LL BE PUT
AWAY FOREVER. LIKE **THREE BIRDS**
WITH ONE AXE -- GETTING RID OF BOTH
CATES **AND** RALPH, AND COLLECTING
A NICE FORTUNE ON THE SIDE! LUCKY
CATES WAS SUCH A SOUND SLEEPER--
IT WASN'T EASY PLANTING THAT
BLOODY AXE ON THE BED
NEXT TO HIM...

YEAH, GOOD THING YOUR
HUSBAND'S SUCH A BOOZER--
IT WAS A GAMBLE HOPING HE'D
COME TO THE PUB. HE FELL FOR
THE **GHOST** STORY LIKE A TON
OF BRICKS! 'COURSE, HOW WAS
HE TO KNOW YOU NEVER REALLY
HAD ANY MONEY--THAT A SCREWY
ECCENTRIC LIKE CATES KEPT
YOU SUPPLIED WITH ALL THE
DOUGH YOU **WANTED**?

WHICH REMINDS ME--
WE'D BETTER GET RID
OF IT BEFORE THE
POLICE RETURN TO MAKE
THEIR INVESTIGATIONS.
YOUR FINGER-PRINTS
ARE ALL OVER IT.



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CREEPY JIGSAW PUZZLE

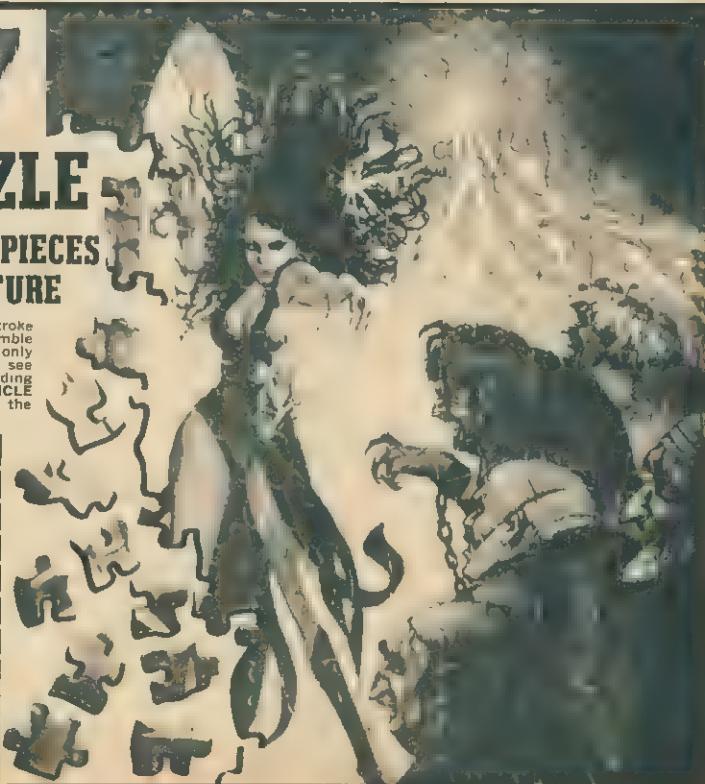
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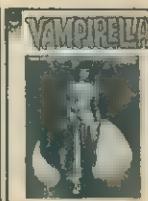
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A raging thunderstorm sets the dark mood for eerie suspense and fear as the reviled monster threatens a panic-stricken community. Bela Lugosi and Basil Rathbone. 200' reel \$6.95

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This film was originally titled "Old Mother Riley Meets the Vampire." Never distributed in the U.S.A., this film is a must for Lugosi fans. ONLY IN SUPER 8. 200' reel. Only \$6.95



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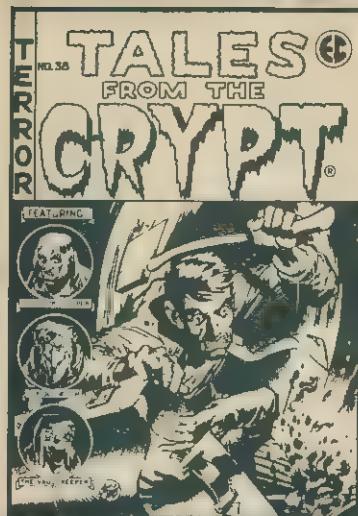
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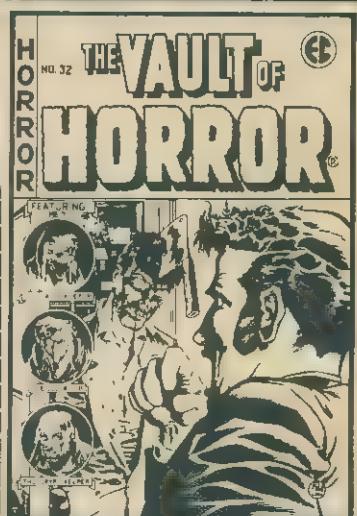
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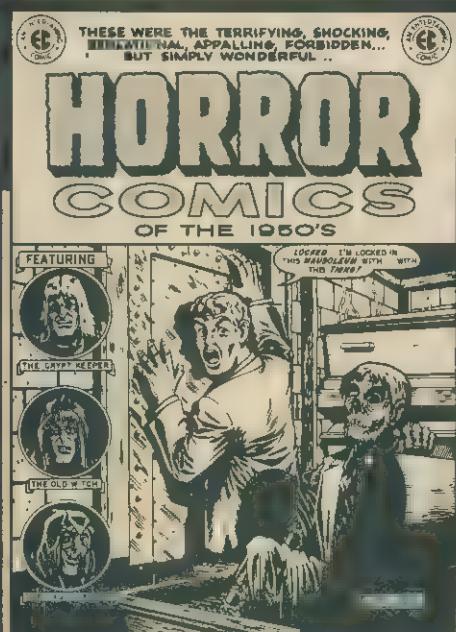
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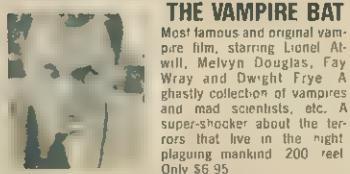
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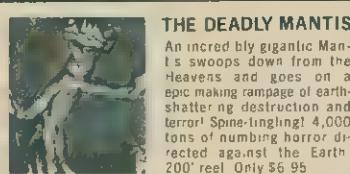
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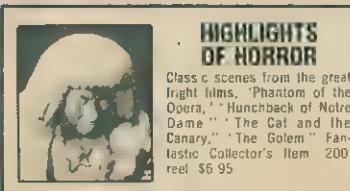
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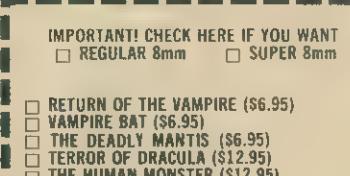
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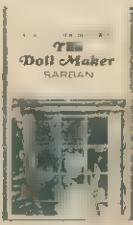
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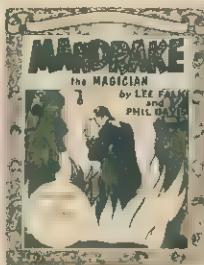
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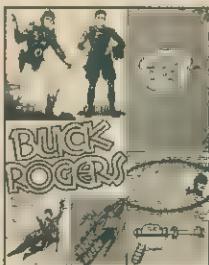
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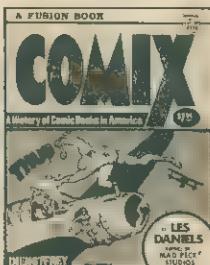
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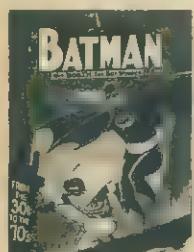
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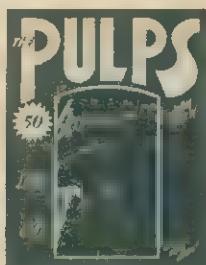
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VAMPI'S FLAMES

WRITER'S PROFILE: KEVIN PAGAN



Portrait of writer Kevin Pagan, whose work "Nymphs" appears on this issue's inside front cover. Garcia art.

The above sketch of me was done by my father, Frank Pagan, who is a partner and Creative Director for a major advertising agency. He originally started as a comics illustrator in the forties. Since my father is a designer and my mother a former professional singer, both periodically wonder where my writing streak came from.

I am a basically decent-looking 22 year-old who doesn't smoke, drinks moderately, has a good home life, and has a hell of a lot of trouble with women. Who

Scenes from stories written by Kevin Pagan. Below, artist William Barry's interpretation of Pagan's first professional comic work, "Laughing Liquid" from Creepy #31. At right, the chiller called "Sleep" from Creepy #44, illustrated by Mike Ploog, a terror epic.



Cerberus, the demon, leads the village children in homage to the devil in the haunting epic, "On the Ninth Day of Satan," illustrated by Felix Mas and written by Kevin Pagan from Creepy #46. Also from Pagan is the terrifying story "Warped!" which appears in the current Eerie, #41. Art by Grandenetti, the story tells of immortality.

doesn't? A Moon Child with a reasonable (sometimes stubborn) disposition, I treasure my bachelorhood, freedom of opinion (in what other country are you so damn free?) and sense of humor. Women's Lib causes me no end of amusement. Not particularly a sports fan, I occasionally break down and watch the Mets. I like Italian food, English horror movies, and toasted bagels.

Since greedily absorbing volumes of Ray Bradbury, A.E. Van Vogt and Edmond Hamilton as a child, I've evolved into a fierce reader of everything from best-sellers to sci-fi paperbacks. I relax my mind by either listening to the Neil Diamond sound or scripting horror-fantasy sagas, the latter of which I've been scribbling down for longer than I can remember.

My first published work was in those amateur, privately printed, ditto-mimeo things called fanzines available only through the mail. First Pro work was way back in Creepy #31, ably illustrated by William Barry. I plan to be a bit more frequent after this in future issues of the Warren magazines. Of course, Editors always have the last word.

EYE OF THE SKULL

In the darkened privacy of his room, Nicholas unwrapped the package, purchased an hour or so before at a Curiosity Shop. It was a time-bleached human skull with a sphere of pure gleaming crystal set in the right eye-socket. As he stared at the skull, turning it in his hands, watching as the light shot through the crystal, he wondered why the shop owner had been so reticent to sell the relic, why he had told all those tales of the skull's origin from the Carpathian mountains of Transylvania. The shopowner, old and balding, the very picture of a miser, warned Nicholas that the skull's previous owner had been a sorcerer who used the skull to guard his sacred grimoire. But Nicholas was determined. He was not going to be put off by a grimy shopkeeper, particularly when he was certain the legends were all a ruse to raise the price of the skull. "Whatever you do," the shopkeeper had said, leading Nicholas out the front door, "do not look into the crystal eye."

What could possibly have been so important about the eye, Nicholas wondered, amused by the foolish tries of the old shopkeeper in trying to raise the ante for the skull.

The thing was harmless enough and might well make an attractive conversation piece, if placed on the mantle where everyone could see it, see the gleaming eye as the light poured through. He looked into the clear depths of the stone. It seemed like a bottomless void drawing him deeper until his eye was against the smooth stone itself. Then, the transparency of the stone altered and it took on a rose-like shade that darkened to scarlet and finally blood red in color.

He felt teeth bite into his throat, severing the jugular vein. Nicholas was powerless to move. The room seemed to swim by its own will, as if alive. As life ebbed away, he could only stare into the ever-reddening stone set in the eye-socket of the skull. He tried with all of his might to fight the powers of the skull but there was nothing to be done, no way out. The room darkened as if through the might of the living presence within the skull, the skull that had been host to a vampire before the unknown sorcerer using stake, axe and spells bound the blood-drinking spirit within the crystal.

By Thomas Pallanta

VEACMPIHE?

Everything about him said vampire! His pallor was a ghastly chalk-white and his lips and tongue looked as if they had been painted red. When he shook hands with me, I felt hair on the palm of his hand. When he smiled, I noticed a pair of gleaming, white fangs, sharp and very deadly. His long, thin hands with their long, sharp fingernails looked strangely like claws. He spoke with the classic Transylvanian accent. The sight of him sent chills up and down my spine. Then, when he began to lick his chops as if in anticipation of a meal, I hurried away, as best I could, running with everything that was in me, fear driving me on with the speed of a wolf. In the end, I suppose the moon was full that night. It is the only explanation.

By Lloyd M. Auerbach



Haunting view of our girl from Drakulon was rendered by West Haven, Conn. reader FRANK VILLANO, JR.

HIDDEN DANGER

The whine of the airship was already in his ears as he emerged from the apartment house. Living right next door to the jetport, the noise was so common that he would not have noticed it at all, had he not hated the magno-jets so much.

"Blasted suicide ships," he muttered as he gazed up at the egg-shaped craft, coming around in a tight loop before its rapid descent to the awaiting runway. As it whizzed past, he cursed the company job that had lured him to this city, forced him to live aside the jetport he loathed. Hardly had he time to complete his thought, when a terse shriek rudely announced the coming of the next magno-jet. As he watched it, he wondered whether anyone realized the danger that this time the craft might not make it.

As always, the craft executed its landing perfectly.

"Why doesn't anybody see the danger?" he asked himself. Feeling defeated, the man sullenly turned his head forward.

Suddenly, a panicky scream pierced the curtain of noise about him and even as he twirled to look, he shivered. A new magno-jet was pitching headlong into a cluster of buildings alongside the jetport and before his horrified eyes, a great ball of fire told of the incendiary devastation which had overtaken his home and the pain in his chest told him that the remote-controlled energy-source for his heart pacemaker had not survived the flaming holocaust.

By Eric W. Flesch

(Fan writer Flesch also has a letter on The Letters page.)

THE ASSASSIN

He lay in a bush tunnel atop a small knoll, overlooking the kill-area. Still, he did not move and had not for hours. Drifting in the night before, he had positioned himself before daylight. Now, at sunset, his target was due. Making a hit in twilight would be tricky, but the following nightfall would simplify his escape. Just as his camouflaged clothing defied detection in his present location, so would darkness cover his fade-out later. He raised himself cautiously to his elbows and brought the small caliber rifle to his shoulder. Where was the target? If he was late tonight, the darkness would be on his side. Steady. The first job was always the toughest; get through this initiation and he'd be on his way. Hired killers were rarely caught and the big money went to the cool kings who always succeeded. He squinted through the scope. Plenty of light left. He checked the silencer-cylinder on the bore, tight and straight. Relax. Stay loose. If not tonight, the next or even the one after that. In hunting, you stalked, waiting.

His kill-area was the back

lot of a secluded, woods-surrounded home. His intended victim always circled the house and entered from the back. But this time instead of sanctuary, death awaited. Movement from the corner of the house caught the killer's eye and he readied his aim. His target moved predictably. The first shot stopped him dead. Perfect! Dead before he hit the ground. Just to be sure, the assassin emptied the remainder of his clip into the victim's spine.

He felt a slight pang of conscience as he rode through the cool night air. It was too bad because it wasn't a bad looking dog. If it hadn't spent its time roaming the nearby neighborhoods, barking in the early dawn hours, the fed-up inhabitants would never have taken up a collection for him to rid them of the nuisance. And he wouldn't have had a chance to begin the realization of a life long dream. He was a professional killer now. He caressed the weapon hidden beneath his jacket and rode on, smiling at the cold and wintry night.

By Bill Canley



"Sorry for the kidding cartoon, VAMPI," writes Manhattan Beach, Calif. fan artist SEAWARD TUTHILL. "You're great!"



Blonde-tressed female, dressed in VAMPIRELLA-type costuming and Levi's brand-trousers, wards off alien laser beams while carrying her true love to safety in this advertising takeoff on the comic book covers of yesteryear currently being promoted by the firm of Levi Strauss, trouser maker. Cartoonish cover ad above appeared in the trade publication, Women's Wear Daily in January.

© Levi Strauss & Co San Francisco

DRINK, MY LOVE

I remember as if it were yesterday. You remember darling, don't you? We were really having a great time. Then you poured the wine in my glass. Softly, you whispered into my ear. "Drink, my love." It was drugged, wasn't it, Wendy?

When I awoke, sometime later, I was lying on the floor. I watched you as you threw my books on 'witchcraft and demonology' into the fireplace. I tried to protest but it was all in vain. You laughed at me. "You believed in this stupid trash, didn't you?" I can still hear your taunts, how I was nothing better than a superstitious idiot. Then you picked up the poker from the fireplace and drove it through my chest. I blacked out in a sea of pain.

What happened after that, I really don't know. You must have bribed some doctor to make out the death certifi-

cate. Then you made the most fatal mistake. You removed the poker from my chest. The next time I opened my eyes, I was in a coffin. Now I am glad that you had the burial vault built. Otherwise, I might have been buried too deep. My hand pushed easily against the coffin lid. How easily. The sun had set and the air was most refreshing. My darling, I am home. I see that you haven't wasted time. A new boy friend, Charles. You heard a noise and called for him but when you came, you saw that he was dead, a poker through his chest.

You were frightened then. You see that trash you burned was what enabled me to return, return as I am now, a huge bat. Yes, my dear, I am a vampire. Remember when you told me to drink? Well, my thirst is being quenched.

By George Siessel

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"The DORIAN GRAY SYNDROME"

BARBARA VASH WAS A FREELANCE WRITER WHO DEALT IN SUBJECTS OF THE OCCULT AND SUPERNATURAL. ONLY A SURE SELLING STORY COULD LURE HER INTO THE LOWER HAUNTS... PLACES FREQUENTED BY SUCH UNDESIRABLE CHARACTERS AS GORDON HATFIELD...

THERE HE IS, SITTING AT THAT TABLE. GORDON HATFIELD! FROM THE LOOKS OF HIM YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE THE INCREDIBLE STORIES GOING AROUND... THAT HE'S ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS OLD!

WELL, I'M NOT GETTING ANY INFO BY STANDING AROUND!

EXCUSE ME, MR. HATFIELD. MY NAME IS BARBARA VASH... AND I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU FOR A FEW MINUTES, IF IT'S OKAY?

YOU'RE A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, MISS VASH. AND UNDER ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES I'D BE GLAD TO INVITE YOU TO MY TABLE... HOWEVER NOT TONIGHT.

YOU SEE... I'M IN MOURNING. THE GIRL I LOVED WAS RECENTLY DISCOVERED DEAD... BY HER OWN HAND.

NOW IF YOU'LL LEAVE ME WITH MY THOUGHTS...



SHE FELT UNEASY ABOUT HATFIELD'S COLDNESS, EVEN THE NEXT MORNING WHEN SHE ATTENDED THE DEAD GIRL'S FUNERAL.



SHE HAD COME FOR A STORY. AFTER ALL SHE WAS A FREELANCE WRITER, SO SHE LISTENED...

I TELL YOU SHE'S LIKE ALL THE OTHERS! SHE MIGHT'VE TAKEN HER OWN LIFE... BUT IT WAS 'CAUSE OF HIM! GORDON HATFIELD!



WHEN I WAS A YOUNGSTER THAT HATFIELD LOOKED THE SAME AGE AS HE DOES NOW! I'VE HEARD RUMORS THAT HE HAS A PAINTING... IT'S HIS PORTRAIT! THEY SAY IT AGES FOR HIM SO HE CAN STAY ETERNALLY YOUNG, IT'S UGLY AND RIDDLED WITH SIN! I EVEN HEARD HE SOLD HIS SOUL TO THE DEVIL FOR IT!



AGAIN...THE SAME STORIES ABOUT HATFIELD, JUST LIKE OSCAR WILDE'S STORY "THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY" I'VE ENCOUNTERED MANY INEXPLICABLE THINGS IN RESEARCHING ARTICLES. MAYBE THIS PAINTING THING ISN'T SO FAR FETCHED AFTER ALL.



I'M SORRY FOR THAT, MY DEAR! BUT YOU SEE, I KNOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND OUT ABOUT GORDON HATFIELD! IF YOU PROMISE TO DO AS I ASK... THEN I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW!

ALL RIGHT! I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU GOT TO ASK, PROVIDED YOU GIVE ME THE STORY I'M AFTER!



ALL RIGHT! THEN LISTEN... FOR I'VE SURVIVED THIS LONG... ONLY TO TELL MY STORY TO THE RIGHT PERSON! I MUST TALK FAST!



HARRHARR! MR. HATFIELD,
HAVE I GOT A GOOD ONE
FER YA!

AN' ME, I GOTCHA'
THAT STUFF YE
BEEN WANTIN'!!

GORDON HATFIELD
HAS ALWAYS BEEN
PROUD OF HIS
HANDSOME FEATURES.
ALL THAT HAS EVER
CONCERNED HIM IS
EARTHLY PLEASURE.
HE EXISTS ONLY TO
SATISFY HIS VARIOUS
LUSTS, FREQUENTING
THE WORST PLACES
IN TOWN AND ASSOC-
IATING WITH SCOUND-
RELS OF EVERY
TYPE."

"THEY SAY THAT GORDON HATFIELD
OFFERED HIS SOUL TO SATAN IN RETURN
FOR PERPETUAL YOUTH. APPARENTLY THE
PRINCE OF DARKNESS ANSWERED HIS
PRAYER, FOR HE WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR
OF A TERRIBLE RAILROAD ACCIDENT..."



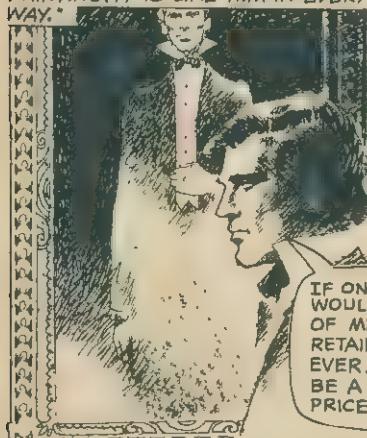
YOU FILTH
WILL BE
WELL PAID...
AS USUAL...



"THERE IS A PAINTING OF HATFIELD
HANGING IN AN UPSTAIRS ROOM
OF HIS MANSION. GORDON HAS
ALWAYS BEEN PROUD OF THAT
PAINTING. IT IS LIKE HIM IN EVERY
WAY."

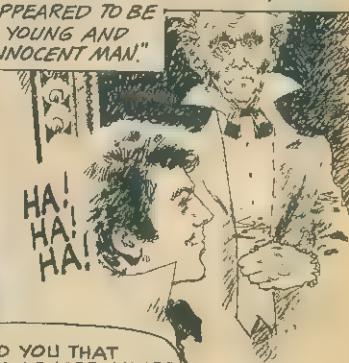
"AND SO IT ALL BEGAN! ALL
THOSE WHO EVER LOVED
HIM... OR HAD ANY DEALINGS
WITH HIM.. LEARNED TRAGEDY!"

"THERE WAS NO ESTIMATING HIS
DEBAUCHERY AND CRIME. ALTHOUGH
THE LAW WAS UNABLE TO PROVE
ANYTHING AGAINST HIM, THE PAINT-
ING REFLECTED THE TRUE EVIL
OF HATFIELD.. YEARS LATER, HE STILL
APPEARED TO BE
A YOUNG AND
INNOCENT MAN."



IF ONLY THE PAINTING
WOULD AGE INSTEAD
OF ME! I COULD
RETAIN MY YOUTH FOR-
EVER! MY SOUL WOULD
BE A CHEAP ENOUGH
PRICE TO PAY!

I TOLD YOU THAT
YOU NO LONGER AMUSE
ME, MY DEAR. IF YOU
PREFER TO KILL YOUR-
SELF, THEN GO AHEAD.
I DON'T CARE.



THAT STORY IS UTTERLY INCREDIBLE!
BUT.. ASSUMING THAT IT'S TRUE,
HOW DO YOU KNOW
SO MUCH ABOUT
HATFIELD?

IVE KNOWN
HIM FOR A LONG
TIME. IT WAS NEVER
MADE PUBLIC. I'M... HIS
DAUGHTER!

MY MOTHER WAS ONE OF THOSE
WHO DIED BECAUSE OF HIM!
AND NOW... YOUR PROMISE...



TAKE THIS KEY...
TO HIS HOUSE...
DESTROY THE PICTURE...
AVENGE ME... AVENGE
MY MOTHER... AND
ALL THE OTHERS!



DEAD! THE STRAIN
WAS TOO MUCH FOR HER!
AND NOW I ALONE HOLD
THE KEY...

BARBARA KNEW SHE WAS COMMITTING AN ILLEGAL ACT. STILL, THE THOUGHT THAT A REAL LIFE "DORIAN GRAY" EXISTED, DROVE HER ON.

THOSE STAIRS...THE OLD WOMAN SAID THE PAINTING WAS KEPT UPSTAIRS. WELL, HERE GOES!

SHE MOVED SILENTLY THERE WERE NO SERVANTS AND HATFIELD WAS NOWHERE ABOUT,

THIS MUST BE THE ROOM! I THOUGHT I KNEW ALL ABOUT THE OCCULT...BUT IF THIS IS REALLY TRUE...

HER HEART WAS READY TO BURST, SHE ENTERED THE FORBIDDING ROOM, RECALLING THE DREAD PROMISE SHE MADE TO THE OLD WOMAN...

A PAINTING!
I'LL TAKE AWAY THE CLOTH...
MAYBE, THIS IS THE PAINTING...
OH, GOD!



...FRESH PAINTS...AND WET BRUSHES ! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE ? WHY WOULD A SUPERNATURAL AGENCY LIKE THE DEVIL NEED PAINTS AND BRUSHES TO DISTORT THE PICTURE ?







IT WAS A DESPERATE ACT, YET BARBARA VASH
WAS AN OCCULT AUTHORITY. PERHAPS SHE KNEW
SOMETHING THAT HATFIELD
DID NOT.





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It's perfectly possible because this is a war that's been going on for the past 30 years. Yes, the past 30 years. That's how long there's been fighting and killing in Vietnam. So it isn't so absurd to think this war can go on for another 8 years, is it?

It's perfectly possible, because in spite of all the speeches and all the promises, the President has yet to set a definite date for withdrawal. Yes, that's true. The President hasn't named a day nor a month nor even a year as a time for getting out.

In fact, the President talks about leaving "residual" forces and "maintenance" troops in or around Vietnam. (If you remember, what got us into this mess was the sending of "advisory personnel" to Vietnam.)

Now do you see why it's perfectly possible that your son will fight in this absurd war? A war where mass murderers of women and children are called "no big deal." A war that has already killed over 50,000 American boys who were 10 years old themselves not so long ago.

One of the most effective things you can do for your son is write your Congressmen today. They must know they have your support to act in Congress against this absurd war.

Write them now. And maybe 10 years from now your son will be glad you did.

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